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**JOHN STUART BLACKIE**



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# JOHN STUART BLACKIE

## *A BIOGRAPHY*

BY

ANNA M. STODDART

*WITH AN ETCHING AND TWO PHOTOGRAVURES*

IN TWO VOLUMES

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# JOHN STUART BLACKIE.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

HOMER.

1861-1866.

It seems to have been in August 1861 that Professor Blackie, on his way from Sudbrooke to Southsea, stopped at Winchfield and tramped over the brown heath to Eversley, to visit Kingsley.

At half-past seven I found myself before the dear, rustic, old English rectory, gracefully shaded by acacias and Scotch firs; and entering in by the open door of the dining-room, found the rector sitting alone over the remains of his dinner in a down-bent musing way. On my apparition, up he started immediately, and with an English shake of the hand called out "Blackie!" I sat down and helped him to drain a bottle of Burgundy. He had been out fishing all day, and was glowing in face

like a tropical copper sky. He was extremely agreeable all evening, and swung in a Manilla grass hammock which stretched across his study, in a style of the most complete *négligé*. His brother Henry came in about half-past eight, and we all smoked, and drank tea, and talked, and went early to bed. My room was low, with rafters in the old style, straw carpets, and engravings of the Madonna on the walls. I slept soundly; and next morning we had a bevy of bright-faced daughters at breakfast, with excellent bacon, fruit, and Devonshire cream. At ten I bolted back to the train.

Lectures on "Education," on "Ancient and Modern Poetry," articles for 'Macmillan's' and other magazines, a paper on "Athens" for the 'Daily Review,' supplemented his work on Homer and his academical duties that year and the next. He spent May 1862 in London, and the summer months were divided between Methven, Dollar, and Lowland rambles. In October he paid Sheriff Glassford Bell a visit, and cemented his acquaintance with Dr Norman Macleod, who wrote in humorous allusion to Dr Guthrie's eloquence:—

I have neither grace nor rhetoric, sunsets nor sailors, wounded soldiers nor drunken mothers, Homeric nor *Bucolics*, but plain things in plain English to plain people. I utterly hate all critics; they are almost as great infidels as the clergy. So leave me alone with my mechanics, in Heaven with prose! But I should like to hear your poetry and to see your phiz. I am engaged every Monday night from eight till ten in my church singing with 300

of my people. But could you lunch with me on Monday at one sharp? Say Yes and "Yir a Gintleman."

The winter which followed was active and varied as usual, but it brought him a touch of bronchitis. This short illness gave him leisure for a study of the German influence on English literature, his reflections upon which took the form of a lecture. It was necessary to find subjects for the lectures which were demanded from him throughout Scotland—his modes of attack, his excellent common-sense, his effervescence of jocular personalities provoked by immediate conditions, making his appearance on provincial platforms especially welcome. But the habit of these appearances into which he fell—at first from good-nature and afterwards from enjoyment—had a deteriorating influence upon his study and treatment of the matters, literary, political, and historical, on which he dwelt. He got, from the enthusiastic welcome accorded him, a fixed impression that his somewhat crude meditations upon all subjects were of value, and this generated a tendency to lecture without sufficient preparation, trusting to a buoyant flow of irrelevant allusions, of nimble asides, of bold and uncompromising digressions, to sustain the credit of a really superficial prelection.

Rustic audiences delighted in the crackle of,

platform squibs, were contented with a small modicum of opinion which generally represented their own, were pleased with his good looks and hilarity, responded to his patriotism, and enjoyed his prejudices. These seldom wrung the withers of the middle-class Scot, who went home with a sense of being roused and entertained, flattered and counselled, and scarcely asked himself whether he had been enlightened. This was, however, a decadence from the rigorous industry and serious conscientiousness which were the hall-marks of his earlier work, and which still distinguished all his more important undertakings. No doubt this popular lecturing, of which these years were full, relieved him from the strain of strenuous study, gave him the movement and variety which were as needful to him as air, and freshened him with the breeze of social intercourse and popularity.

When the session was over, the Blackies, joined by Miss Fanny Stoddart, went to the Highlands in May 1863. They took up their quarters at Kinlochewe, in the comfortable little inn at the head of Loch Maree. There a sprained ankle kept Miss Stoddart a prisoner for some weeks, and the proposed excursion to Skye fell to the Professor's lonely lot. It was at Kinlochewe that his ear was opened to the philological importance of Gaelic.

The post-laddie was waiting for letters at the inn door, and holding his pony by the bridle. "What is the Gaelic for horse?" asked the Professor, as he handed him a packet for the post. "*Each*," said the boy, and the sound set his questioner's mind aworking. Surely this was first cousin to *equus*, and was worthy of further research. And so germinated his interest in Gaelic, which grew to such purpose in after years. Later they settled in Oban for a couple of months, enchanted with the beauty of its bay and its marvellous sunsets. The little town had waxed, and modest lodgings were available, but it was still next neighbour to sweet solitude, and its heights were undefiled. The burnet rose perfumed seaward shelves of grass; the bogbean filled damp corners of the pastures; ferns fringed the old stone walls; in the niches by the rocks rose the slim purple butterwort. On the moors tottered and stumbled the baby peewits, and overhead from time to time there wheeled a golden eagle.

A first vague longing for a summer home was born in those July rambles along the Sound of Kerrera. One evening Miss Stoddart pointed to a little plateau which stretched between cliff and upland,—“There,” she said, “build your cottage there.”

Miss Bird and her sister, beloved in the islands,



and Mr Hutcheson, the "Admiral of the West," were at Oban too that year, and piloted by them, they grew familiar with the beauty in which the town was set as in a ring.

An article on "Pulpit Eloquence" for the 'Musæum' occupied the Professor's leisure in October, and drew an appreciative letter from Dr Robert Lee. But that true friend commented wisely on the scene which the inaugural lecture of November excited in the Greek class-room :—

If you put a large audience, especially a youthful audience, into roars of laughter in the beginning, it is almost impossible afterwards to get them to listen to anything sober and didactic. On the whole, I cannot help thinking that you do yourself an injustice by these opening lectures. Many hear them who never hear your steady, sober, and practical proceeding in your everyday work, and go away with an impression which is equally false and pernicious. None of the rest of us invite such gatherings—why do you ?

It was matter for regret to all who knew his worth that his palate itched for this dubious popularity, and that the craving grew upon him. Boyhood in him survived its proper term, and its incalculable impulses, noisy, impish, laughter-loving, inconsiderate, checkered his character as a professor and as a lecturer. The presence of a motley audience, amongst whom were the grave and sensitive as well as the young and provoca-

tive, was like a match to these lines of explosives which veined the seriousness known best to his household. Gentle, tender, unselfish, tranquil, and wise at home, the intervention of a stranger transformed him into an excited, reckless, and startling being, and unfortunately many who saw him in a phase which themselves provoked, went away with an indelible impression as untrue as had been his behaviour. Only his friends could both tolerate and enjoy these extravagances, knowing through what sound and lovable reality they bubbled up into momentary effervescence.

On the 22d and 26th of April 1864 he lectured to the Royal Institution of London on Lysurgus and the Spartan laws. He wrote from Dr Hodgson's house in St John's Wood, where he stayed during this epoch, to Mrs Blackie :—

The first London lecture is over, as comfortably as if it had been an address to my own students. Wilson and Christison were there to see how their colleague behaved. Wilson said there was no impropriety. I saw hosts of friends—the Archers, Mrs Gregory, the Kinglakes, John Stuart Glennie, Dr Priestley, Dallas, &c. I had some pleasant talk with Faraday and Bence Jones, a fine jolly Englishman. But the greatest luck was the presence of Bishop Thirlwall, who is on my side as against Grote, and who would be delighted to hear his old-fashioned sensible view of the Spartan agrarian laws vindicated against the brilliant novelties of a sceptical generation.

On the 25th he met Mr Herbert Spencer, not yet solemnised into his rôle of a philosophical Atlas, but the author of a series of essays on education in varied aspects, of whom great things were expected.

He is quiet and unassuming [wrote the Professor], and most clear, accurate, and well-adjusted in his expressions,—a very lovable sort of man, logical without being angular. Yesterday, my second lecture went off with greater swing than the first. At all events, the subject was more interesting and more popular. The job is done. I made no great blunder, and the people seemed marvelously pleased. Only one gentleman was so offended by the eulogy that I made of war—as according to the order of Providence a great school of manhood—that he lifted up his voice openly against my doctrine and then walked out.

A very interesting habit was inaugurated during this visit to London. He wrote on May 5th :—

Yesterday I breakfasted with Gladstone in his Carleton Terrace house, just next door to where I so often enjoyed the sunlight of dear old Bunsen's countenance. Gladstone was extremely agreeable, easy, cheerful, and talkative, and not at all so wiry and dark as his photographs represent him. Present were his fair lady and daughter, Whewell of Trinity and his lady, before whom I exploded emphatically about the absurdity of English pronunciation of Greek and Latin, Gladstone being distinctly on my side, and the Cambridge don more than half. I told him roundly that the English schoolmasters were as hard-

hided as a rhinoceros, and utterly impenetrable to reason, nature, and common-sense. The Lord Advocate, who was also present, told me he was perfectly delighted with the manner in which I walked round about the mighty Cambridge don. I did not mean to do anything of the kind; but of all exhibitions of poor, pretentious humanity, donnism is to me the most odious, so there was no harm done. I am sure I was not impertinent, only decidedly and distinctly explosive.

A dinner with Kinglake, a visit to the Dobells, a talk with Thirlwall on early Greek history—his memory of which was troubled by the misgiving that in the heat of argument he had put his hand in friendly fashion upon the episcopal knee—a call upon Grote, and a supper at Covent Garden Club, where he met a group of literary men perhaps less dignified and more entertaining, made up the sum of new impressions during this eventful month in London.

On May 10th he wrote from Farringford, Freshwater:—

As soon as my London engagements were satisfied, I came down here. After half an hour's sail, quarter of an hour's drive brought me to this quiet and truly English little mansion. The lady of the house received me in the most gentle, gracious manner. She is of the genuine, sweet-blooded, sweet-voiced English style, dressed in black and white, loose-flowing. By this time it was five o'clock. The poet [Tennyson] came down-stairs from a hot bath which he had just been taking, quite in an easy

unaffected style; a certain slow heaviness of motion belongs essentially to his character, and contrasts strikingly with the alert quickness and sinewy energy of Kingsley; head Jovian, eye dark, pale face, black flowing locks, like a Spanish ship-captain or a captain of Italian brigands,—something not at all common and not the least English. We dined, talked, and smoked together, and got on admirably. He reads Greek readily, and has been translating bits of Homer lately in blank verse. This morning after breakfast we walked about, inspecting the beauties of the park and adjacent village; having a fine look-out through the trees to the sea both on the north and the south side of the island; quite an English scene—water, wood, and softly rounded green hills.

Long after, in his old age, the Professor spoke of this visit with a reverence very unusual to him in allusion to his contemporaries, and a few flowers gathered in Tennyson's garden were carefully pressed and affixed to his copy of "In Memoriam."

On the way home he spent a few days at Oxford, and met John Bright at a dinner-party given by the Professor of Political Economy.

I have seen only a glimpse of Jowett [he wrote]; he makes himself a perfect slave to his work, and is seldom visible.

Some weeks of autumn were spent in the West Highlands, and Oban began to weave meshes of

association about them. The dream of a summer home by its bay grew familiar, and crept into their plans for the future as a cherished possibility, which was emboldened by the hearty welcome which it received in the place, by the smoothing away of obstacles, and by the discovery that the very plateau which suggested the dream was to be had for a building site. When they returned to Edinburgh it was with all the information needed for decision, and they had but to give the alternative freedom of movement its due weight. The Professor was strongly attracted by the scheme of a Highland home. There were mighty bens to be topped ; there were breezy moors and heather-scented downs over which to stride in daily converse with the Muse ; there were seas and islands for exploration ; there were people in every glen who spoke a language of ancient origin, which bore the very features of its ancestral kinship millenniums back. Here was matter for contemplation, for study, for emotion, for new ventures in human intercourse, for a fresh world into which to withdraw when spring hung her scented tassels on the larch. Of all these lures the most powerful was the Gaelic language.

For Mrs Blackie the thought of a home by the blue sound, which should look over to the purple

hills of Mull and Morven, a place of rest from the wearisome round of winter duties,—

❧ A resting-place from worries,  
Door bells, dinners, notes, and hurries,”—

had become a craving. There was only one deterrent consideration. If they built this cottage by the sea their wings would be clipped, and they must forbear variety. Already Mrs Blackie's health had begun to give way, and she had ceased to accept the invitations which were showered upon her husband and herself. It was the rule for him, justified by rare exception, to dine out alone. Her courage was daunted by illness into desire for rest. But she had still stores of energy, which found vent within her house in active hospitality. The Professor found only evening visitors convenient while he was engrossed with the work of the session, with his lectures and Homeric studies, but welcomed the prospect of a country home dedicated to guests. Deliberation swayed to the plan of a cottage at Oban; and their income, now increased from sources outside the emoluments of the chair, had left a margin, saved during several years, which sufficed for the cost of building.

That autumn, when the session began, his inaugural lecture included—in its survey of philo-

logical topics—a special discourse on Gaelic as important to the study of language. This was fully reported, and drew from many educated Highlanders a warm acknowledgment. He had only begun to study Gaelic; but already its beauty, its poetic capabilities, its kinship to Sanscrit, Greek, and Latin, convinced him of the recklessness of letting the language perish. Amongst those who responded to his rally was Mr David Hutcheson, who sent the Professor a free pass for the year 1865 in all his West Highland steamers, reiterating the hope that Oban might soon claim him as a townsman. But the plan could not be immediately put into execution. There was first of all the publication of 'Homer' to be arranged. He was in correspondence with Mr Theodore Martin, Mr Dallas, and Dr John Carlyle on the subject. All three urged on him the issue of his work by Murray, or failing that eminent publisher, by an Edinburgh firm. The manuscript had attained colossal proportions. In addition to three volumes of translation and notes, there was an introductory volume of Dissertations, ten in number, on the whole subject of the personal Homer, the Epic Cycle, the minstrel and epic artist, the authenticity of the text, and the various forms of translation. He decided to go to London and interview the publishers him-



self. A visit from the Henry Bunsens delayed him at home till the middle of May 1865, when he accepted an invitation to stay with Mr and Mrs James Archer in Phillimore Gardens until his quest should be ended. Mr Dallas and Mr Martin introduced him to Messrs Longman, and his old acquaintance with the Macmillans gave him an opportunity to offer them his 'Homer' for publication. But both of these firms declined the risk attached to so bulky a production. Mr Grote gave him a letter to Murray which procured him an interview, and he was asked to forward parts of both the introductory volume and of the translation for decision. This gave him courage to enjoy the remainder of his stay in town, which formed, as usual, a lively record of dinners and social successes. At home with artists, whose society he always preferred to that of scholars, he enjoyed meeting and visiting the Faeds, Erskine Nicol, Spanish Phillip, and others of the genial and natural confraternity.

On his way home he spent a few days at Cambridge; but the absence of the Grecians whom he wished to consult was disappointing, and but for an encounter with the Miss Thackerays and Paley, and for the kind attentions of Mr Clark and Mr Aldis Wright, his halt would have proved unprofitable.

In Edinburgh, pending Murray's decision, he occupied himself with correspondence on the pronunciation of Greek, provoked by letters sent earlier in the year to both the 'Times' and the 'Scotsman.' But towards the end of June he was invited to be one of the examiners at the Inverness Academy, and received an honourable welcome from the local authorities. While there he went out to Blackhills, near Elgin, to see his colleague, Professor Aytoun, who was then dying, although he cheered up at sight of an old friend, and gave no sign of the approaching end. In August 1865 Mrs Aytoun wrote:—

You were the last of his Edinburgh friends to see him, and I am sure you could have had little idea that it was for the last time. Your visit was a real pleasure to him; he thought it so kind of you to come so far out of your way to pay it. And he had so much fellow-feeling for all his colleagues that the sight of one of them cheered him.

The 8th of July brought him Mr Murray's letter declining to publish 'Homer' on the ground of its bulk. A suggestion that the Dissertations might be issued without the translation was opposed to the Professor's aim, which it did not occur to him to modify. The blow was smart. Every London publisher of standing to whom he applied refused the enterprise, and his hope of impressive issue was

checked. Doubtless the appearance of Lord Derby's 'Homer' two years earlier had forestalled what popular demand existed for a new translation. The classical readers to whom his manuscript had been submitted were averse to the ambling pace of his ballad measure, as unsuited to express the majestic march of the Homeric line. But it was just to that comfortable amble that he pinned his faith. His horizon was now narrowed to Scotland, and he proposed the publication to Messrs Edmonston & Douglas, who undertook it on the condition that they should be guaranteed against loss.

His acceptance of this disappointment illustrates one of the most beautiful features in a very lovable character. Its spirit is breathed in the closing lines of the Dissertations, which run :—

Whether or not I shall be judged to have made any thankworthy contribution to the translated literature of my country, the man who has spent twelve years of honest toil in the study of such an author as Homer has already received the better half of his reward.

No words of those who knew him well could better portray his constant attitude towards work and relatively towards success. The superficial effusive enjoyment of popularity, which led ob-

servers to credit him with vanity, was but the honest expression of what little vanity he had. At heart no man was ever more modest, was ever less tormented by over-estimate of himself, was ever more free from wounded egotism. He worked for work's sake, and kept his mind in sound activity, his disposition in love and tolerance toward all men. If rare invective whetted his sallies, it was against those only who would have cramped the flow and ebb of human thought into the dull ditch of their own dogmatism, never against those who depreciated himself.

A week after he received Mr Murray's letter he was at Broughton in Peebles, climbing hills, singing his new songs, exploring the Tweed to its source, making Mossfennan ring with sympathetic laughter.

'Homer' disposed of for the nonce, he and Mrs Blackie started for the Highlands in August. They went to Oban, where the site for their house had been secured. A walk of half a mile from the town round the southern horn of the bay led by the Sound of Kerrera to a cliff from whose brow retired a green and sheltered plateau. A bank led up to it on the townward side, flanked by a rocky gorge down which rattled a burn. The bank was flattened out below into a triang-

ular field, where a mill utilised the stream. This field was unattainable, but the bank and the plateau and a bit of the rolling upland at its back were secured. The plan had outgrown its first projection, and promised a comfortable turreted house, whose many bedrooms were to express unstinted welcome. The architect, inspired by Mrs Blackie, achieved a complete and symmetrical design, and their stay was much engrossed with all the details of its execution. Larches and firs were set where the ground was exposed, the bank was laid out in grassy terraces, and shrubs which sea-air fosters were planted at every point of vantage. When all was set agoing they went to Mull, an island always magnetic to the Professor.

They returned to Edinburgh to the growing interest of Carlyle's installation as Lord Rector of the University.

DEAR BLACKIE [Carlyle wrote on November 13],—I am thinking seriously about the assessorship; also about studying the Installation speech, if that be at all feasible. Assist me in that if you humanly can! From Sir D. Brewster I have a note, brief as your own and touching upon the same topics. Is that to be the commencement to me of this fine Dignity; or am I to expect something more formally official?

The world knows all the details of that instal-

lation now, and of the tragedy so soon to overshadow its chief actor.

The proofs of the Dissertations and the translation were issuing from the press. Professor Blackie sent copies to Dr George Macdonald, to Theodore Martin, to Dr Donaldson, and to Sheriff Trotter at Dumfries, asking for ample criticism. From these friends he received both excellent amendments and comments upon the looseness of his versification, on the ground of which he corrected many lines, and these obligations he has recorded in his preface. Of them all Sheriff Trotter seems to have spoken most plainly, and to have effected the largest number of corrections, but to Dr Donaldson's fine scholarship he owed a thorough revisal of the notes. The winter was occupied with proof-correcting, and a correspondence with Mr Scaramanga points to a vigorous revival of the Hellenic Society, for the further hellenisation of whose members he ordered some dozens of various Greek wines.

The Baroness Bunsen had begged him to translate for her a number of poems by her husband, which were the expression of strong feeling at different crises of Bunsen's life, and he was able to return them to her in English dress at Christmas-time.

In January 1866 he was much encouraged

by a letter from Mr Theodore Martin, with an opinion on the Dissertations, which had been sent to him in proof-sheets :—

I feel confident that the book will be welcome to all who care about good literature, be they scholars or no. I think your chapter on the Wolfian theory masterly.

Another interest of the month was the impeachment of Dr Norman Macleod by the Judaic party in the Scottish Church, and a very natural outburst of sympathy reached the culprit at Osborne, from which dignified sanctuary he responded :—

I am in a sort of way acknowledging the kind letters sent to me during this time of, let me frankly confess it, severe trial to me. I thank you very cordially for yours. God bless you for it. A day of freedom is coming—I could die to usher it sooner in by an hour. As I write I see the white houses of Portsmouth and the big black ships like Leviathans afloat, but my heart's in the Highlands. Hurrah! there screams the bagpipe! Ross, bless him, is pouring forth his notes like the cries of sea-birds in a storm. I wish I saw Drs Muir, Gibson, and company dancing the Reel of Hoolachan. It would humanise them more than all the presbyteries in Scotland. I begin to dislike the clergy! Heaven forgive me—I suppose there is some wicked inspiration in me!

The correcting of 'Homer' lasted through the session and occupied the summer months. Early in August they returned to Oban. Altnacraig

was nearly finished, and had received its name from the burn which dashed down its rocky glen. All Mrs Blackie's art was given to its plenishing ; and already the promise of a home with comfort and beauty for twin presences smiled upon its owners. While her orders were in execution, they made a Hebridean tour, first taking Mull, where they paid Dr Cumming a visit at the "*Parva Domus*," abode of "*Magna Quies*."

The Constables were at Greshornish, and attracted them thither, so that the royal Cuchul-lins in sunset purple and gold became familiar to them. When they returned to Oban, it was to take possession of their Highland home. Miss Henrietta Bird was the welcoming bard :—

“ Thus at last hath the ideal  
On this rock become the real,  
Born of bright imagination,  
Outlined forth by contemplation,  
Reared in fancies vague.  
Now at last in fair expansion  
Standeth it,—a goodly mansion.  
Blessings on its walls and towers,  
On its gardens and its bowers,  
Beauteous Altnacraig ! ”

One of its towers was the Professor's own domain, and was soon lined with books and supplied with writing-table and easy-chairs. Here he could croon over Gaelic and shout over Greek,



and fill his soul with thankful adoration, when he gazed from the window over green Kerrera and the Sound to the dreamy Bens of Mull. Downstairs three large sitting-rooms, all looking to the sea, opened one into the other, and breathed warmth, comfort, home in every nook. The road, which ran below, was lost to sight, but voices and laughter reached the loungers on the heather-cushioned verge of the cliff, and there a seat was set to watch the white yachts as they stole along the Sound, or glided like spectres beyond Kerrera.. Through the young firs glowed the crimson sunset, flushing the long vista of waves in Morven Sound. The seat upon the cliff became the trysting-place of hosts and guests at teatime, and on balmy nights they reassembled there, sometimes to look on the moonlit sea, often to waft on high a hymn of praise.

Almost simultaneous with this home-coming was the appearance of the four Homeric volumes. They were dedicated to Professor Welcker at Bonn, to Dr George Finlay at Athens, and to Mr W. G. Clark of Trinity College, Cambridge. The first copies were sent to them, and to all who had assisted the Professor in correcting the proofs. Mr Robert Horn, Mr David Hutcheson, Mr Duncan M'Laren, Professor Daniel Wilson at

Toronto, are conspicuous amongst the friends outside that group of helpful Homerids who received copies.

The aim of the whole undertaking was to exhibit the Homeric Epics to the intelligent readers of our country, so translated and so complemented by treatise and explanation that the lack of Greek might prove no barrier to full enjoyment of their themes. It was therefore to a popular and not to an academical public that Professor Blackie appealed. This aim, so far as he was concerned, was amply fulfilled; but the apathy of a full-fed middle class to the banquets of gods and heroes, its aversion to the lofty survivals of remote ages—an aversion extended to the Bible, as well as to Homer, the Vedas, the Shastras—defeated the better half of an unselfish purpose. Four stout volumes full of however readable matter weighed deterrently on the imagination. The epoch of serials had begun to run its stormy course, and the nation liked its literature cheap. Inevitably the book was bought by men who knew and cared for Greek, and its estimate was decided by the very class for whom it was not written. The class is small, and the sale failed to cover the cost of publication. The Professor lost £200 by the venture, and doubtless most of

those writers who devote themselves to classical literature have paid a like penalty for their preference.

The ten dissertations which occupy the first volume are brimming with the interest which inspired their author. No more vivid chapter was ever written than that which deals with the historic personality of Homer. Of the personal Homer he had no manner of doubt. "The Greeks did not forget Homer. He was as living in their memory, through their whole history, as the person of Robert Burns is in the heart of every true Scot." Wolf and his followers had indeed raised the question, but the "taint of misty negation" was wont to come from Germany on each and every subject of intrinsic evidence. He did not despise the research and the discoveries of Wolf, but he refused his conclusions, for which these discoveries afforded scanty ground. Faith in Homer "rests directly and naturally on the double fact that there exists a great poem, which demands the existence of a great author, and that this authorship has been constantly recognised by the consciousness of the Greek people in the person of Homer."

Having championed the man Homer against all comers,—German heretics and their English proselytes,—he proceeded to make prominent his

dramatic methods. These were illustrated by fifteen marks of Epic poetry, such as magnitude, national significance, grandeur of expression, unity, rapidity of movement, the superhuman element, and other cognate and dependent conditions. Homer's acceptance with the Greeks, who revered him in a common national sentiment which overbore all tribal feud, admitted him to the highest rank amongst poets for ever, because the Greeks were nothing if not critical, and what they placed above the scathe of criticism cannot be challenged. Homer lasted as the main influence over the best Hellenic mind, and when his loftier theology and his robuster manliness ceased to educate, the doom of Greece was at hand. The preservation of the Homeric text; the interpolations, continuations, and corruptions due to successive generations of Homerids; the various English translations; the choice of rhythm in each,—these occupied the concluding dissertations. In the last Professor Blackie justified his adoption of the ballad-couplet on the ground that the poems were ballads, and that, transferred from the ballad hexameters of Homer to the ballad measure of the English popular songs, they can best render their character and significance to the English mind.

Coming to that transference, we find a com-

portable version of the great epics, sometimes rising to their own candid grandeur, but on the whole more fluent than impressive. It is difficult to acknowledge Homer's supremacy, if the language employed in this translation keenly conveys the original. Only now and then do the epithets satisfy the ear; only now and then do they overtop the level of easy descriptive verse. None the less the series of scenic episodes is well presented, and if robed in less than epic majesty, their heroes condescend the more readily to the sympathies of the general. An impression is left on the mind of too facile execution, and the attention wearies somewhat of the long, low rise and fall of the ballad couplets, varied here and there by prolongation and by triplets. But in spite of a form which depresses the "strong-wing'd music of Homer," making it flag with drooping pinion, the purpose of popularising its subject-matter is fully achieved, and would have been widely recognised had Professor Blackie issued a work more moderate in bulk and cost. Admirable as are the Dissertations, they are swollen with analogies and illustrations sometimes far-fetched, and often amplified at the expense of their argumentative value. Had all these superfluities, these vague reiterations, been eliminated, there would have

remained a small volume of the greatest worth, the outcome of rare industry and scholarship, couched in clear and vigorous language, and conveying to every educated reader the very pith and marrow of its subject. Perhaps this audacious criticism, of a labour vast beyond the critic's ken, may be ended by quoting a fine and well-known passage from the second book of the 'Iliad' as a specimen of the many successful transmutations achieved :—

“ And now the war was sweeter far to each well-greaved  
Achæan,

Than to seek his home across the foam of the billowy broad  
Ægean.

As when destroying fire hath caught a stretch of dry old pines  
High on a hill-top, and afar the blazing forest shines ;  
So shone the copper-coated host, as rank on rank advances,  
While flash quick brands in a thousand hands, and gleam the  
eager lances.

And as the uncounted tribes that scour the sky with mighty  
vans

Of geese or vagrant-banded cranes, or the long-necked race of  
swans,

Where far the Asian lowland spreads, and by Cayster's flow,  
Freely on joyful pinions sail, and wander to and fro,  
And with their clanging wings loud rings the mead where they  
alight ;

Thus swarmed the Greeks from ship and tent, to find the  
fateful fight

Far o'er Scamander's plain : and earth rebellowed to the sound,  
As the mail-clad men and the four-hoofed horse tramped o'er  
the hollow ground,

Till on the broad grass mead they stood, a marshalled multitude,  
Countless as flowers in flowery spring, or leaves in a leafy  
wood.

And even as swarms of busy flies on buzzing wings are spread,  
Drifting in clusters through the air, close by some shepherd's  
shed,

In the spring-time, when in the pail the creaming milk doth  
flow ;

Not fewer then the Argive men in many a glittering row  
Stood ; while each long-haired warrior pants to pierce some  
Trojan foe."

## CHAPTER XV.

## THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS.

1866-1870.

IT was early in November 1866 that, presiding at a meeting of the Working Men's Club, at its Institute in the High Street of Edinburgh, Professor Blackie launched forth into an invective against the Reform Bill, which at that time was in process of incubation, and, charging somewhat unadvisedly down the vistas of "manhood suffrage" and "the ballot," flung a challenge in the faces of their champions. This was reported in the 'Scotsman' of November 12 as follows :—

If you will appoint a night for a lecture, and set Blackie on the one side, and Bright, or Beales, or Jones, or M'Laren, or the honourable member, the late Lord Advocate, for whom I have a great respect, on the other side,—then with Aristotle in one pocket and Plato in



the other, and a great deal of Scotch rummlegumption in the front battery, I think they will find me a sharp customer.

There is little doubt that the gauntlet was a mere rhetorical flourish, and that he expected no knight of reform to pick it up. He did not account himself a politician, and was seldom acquainted with the *pros* and *cons* of party questions. His opinions on these were evolved in the manner which he indicated himself—from classic precedent and his own consciousness. But reckless rhetoric in print is apt to rouse a Nemesis. The Scottish National Reform League played the part of the goddess, and inspired Mr Ernest Jones, then known as an able advocate of Manhood Suffrage, to respond to the challenge. The Professor, astounded to find himself the representative of a party, backed by the *optimi*, at whom he was as wont to fling his spear as at their political opponents, wriggled restlessly at first; but the ranks both of supporters and of foes closed round him, and he buckled on his armour in face of the inevitable. Mr Ernest Jones accepted all the terms of the original challenge, genially asking to be enlightened as to the fighting value of “rummlegumption.” The Reform League instructed the secretary of the Working Men’s Club to make the necessary

arrangements, and it was finally settled to engage the Music Hall in George Street for the evenings of the 3d and 4th January 1867, when Democracy should on the first night be handled by the challenger, and on the second be supported by Mr Jones on precisely the same terms of ancient precedent as those used in the attack. Of course this gave an advantage to the first speaker, who could carefully prepare and execute his indictment, while the defence was perforce almost extempore; but Professor Blackie forwarded a copy of his address some days beforehand to Mr Jones, who proved to be a man of fine classical attainments, and to whom the subject in its modern application was fully familiar. At the festival of the "Blackie Brotherhood" Mr Alexander Nicolson sang a prophetic song of the bloodless encounter:—

"And so, when each has talked his span,  
And thinks that he has floored his man,  
The fight will close where it began,  
And so will end the story.

Then here's to Blackie, and long live he  
To fight against Democratie;  
And may we all be there to see,

And shout in the hour of his glory!

*Chorus*—Hey, John Bright, are ye talking yet,  
And is your tongue awagging yet?  
Here's our Blackie will mak mince meat  
Of you and your gang of reformers."

The hall was crowded with an audience eager for the fray. The knights combatant received an enthusiastic welcome, and each applauded the other's address with chivalrous enthusiasm. On the first evening Mr Dun, President of the Working Men's Club, and on the second Mr Duncan M'Laren, occupied the chair.

The Professor sought to establish the inevitable failure of the republican system from the examples of Greece, Rome, Venice, and France,—for the Second Empire was at that date dominant over the betrayed Republic of the last country,—and he pointed to the corruption existing in the political atmosphere of New York in support of his contention. His lecture lasted nearly three hours, and was heard with close attention, marked by vivacious cheering and hissing on the part of the audience. He bore the counter-demonstration with perfect good-humour, retorting at times on his opponents with the gibe that his wisest remarks were best hissed. On the next evening Mr Jones proved easily enough that at all events Greece and Venice reached their culmination under republican rule. The lances clashed briskly, but neither was shivered,—“the fight *did* close where it began.”

The Professor's lecture was printed and widely circulated, and it won him a *kudos* amongst

Conservatives which rather disconcerted him ; for he was a born *franc-tireur*, and had a blushing consciousness of views upon land, upon the crofter question, and on other delicate matters about to see the light, which would divert the graciousness now radiating towards him.

In April 1867 he spoke on the same subject in Manchester, and Mr Ernest Jones paid him the compliment of attending on the platform, although the meeting was held under the auspices of a Conservative Association. Sad to tell, this courteous and able opponent died not long after.

In the preceding November, Professor Blackie had delivered two lectures on Plato to the members of the Philosophical Institution, and he was invited to give these in London on the platform of the Royal Institution in May 1867. From Manchester he went to town to fulfil this engagement, and took up his quarters with Mr and Mrs Archer, as he had done two years before. But in the meantime his programme had been enlarged by an evening lecture on classical pronunciation in our Universities, with the title "Music of Speech in the Greek and Latin Languages." His listeners on the subject of Platonic Philosophy numbered amongst them the Duke of Argyll, Dr Hodgson, and Dr George Macdonald ; but how-

ever brilliantly salted, he found the audience unsympathetic. He was confronted "with rows of parchment faces incapable alike of fun or fervour," and he compared their chilling reserve with the lively response to be got from rows of genial Scots in an Edinburgh hall. The evening lecture was delivered on May 3.

With a galaxy of well-dressed ladies in front, I determined to dash into them just as if I had been in my own classroom, and achieved a great success. Gladstone was there, sitting right opposite me, and it was a pleasure to see the severe lines of his face relax into wreathed smiles and expand into diffusive laughter at the manner in which I handled the Oxonians.

The Professor had much to say on a question which had engaged his interest nearly forty years before, and to bear on which he brought stores of scholarship, reason, and enthusiasm. He was conscious, too, of the indifference in England to the conclusions of a Scottish scholar, even the few accordant voices at Oxford and Cambridge being then apathetic as to practical reform; and this consciousness lent a touch of defiance to his appeal for a common-sense pronouncement. The lecture was printed and disseminated.

When unburdened of these prelections, he gave himself up to social enjoyment dashed with research. On both counts he paid a visit to Har-

row, his host there being Mr Farrar, now the Dean of Canterbury; but his hope of class-inspection was checked by the headmaster's *non possumus*. He found the "Harrow Dons a very mild and polished and refined sort of people, and not at all formidable to a Scotch Professor."

After his return to Kensington he dressed in white-choker pomp, and walked up to the Duke of Argyll's house, where we dined at eight o'clock. The party was small and agreeable: John Bright, Dr M'Cosh, and Lord and Lady Amberley were the most interesting constituents. It is impossible to see Bright without liking him. There was excellent conversation after dinner about the prospects of the negroes, the female vote, Gladstone, Spurgeon, and what not. But of all, nothing pleased me so much as Lady Amberley, a piece of nature and grace combined.

The Theodore Martins introduced him to Mr Robert Browning, and he described his first call as follows:—

From Lord Strangford I shot across to Browning the poet. He received me with the greatest frankness, having known me of old from the Æschylean correspondence I had with his wife. He showed me her Greek books all written over with commentary. He is an active, soldier-like, direct man, a contrast to the meditative ponderosity of Tennyson. The person and attitude in each case is a perfect index to the movement of the poetry. He has a tame owl with black staring eyes, which jumps about the room, and amused me very much. He told me all about his new poem, on which he has been working for years.

A short visit to Oxford divided his term in London, and there he added to his acquaintances the late Dr Appleton, Fellow of St John's, and afterwards editor of the 'Academy.'

We retired to his rooms after dinner, when I had an opportunity of hearing how ingeniously these gentlemen can justify the Athanasian Creed and other dogmatic pedantries.

From the argument he fled at last, leaving on his host the impression that he was affronted at the turn which it had taken. A letter followed him to London, in which Dr Appleton explained:—

I was afraid that you thought we were trying to entangle you in an Oxford word-juggle; and that, like the lion, you thought it best to burst the cords at once and be gone. So far as my opinion goes, the subjects upon which we were talking were far too important to allow of being treated in a sophistical way. At the same time, I am not a Ritualist, nor a Romaniser, nor an extreme Anglican. I am, like you, a Protestant; but it appears to me that Protestantism, as a point of view, is unintelligible unless we regard the consolidation of doctrine and discipline under the auspices of Rome as its necessary and therefore Providential antecedent.

This to Professor Blackie!

The Rector of Lincoln College and Professor Max Müller furnished fresh and sympathetic talk, and after four days' hearty hospitality from the much-abused Oxford Dons, he returned to town.

A visit to Norwich exhausted his southern programme, and at the end of May he joined his wife at Altnacraig. Here a letter reached him from Dr George Finlay, from which some sentences are worth quoting :—

I have found, as I advanced in reading the ‘Iliad,’ that your metre gained on me, and I am now a convert to your measure. You have more carats of pure Homeric gold than your predecessor Pope, but you have used red copper to work your metal, and by using silver as the alloy he makes a good show, and can put in more of the inferior material and look genuine. Your work is a great one, and exhausts the inquiry of Homer, in Homer.

The summer passed in hearty enjoyment of his Highland retreat, which already was become a place of pilgrimage for friendly pedestrians. He dislodged Greek and University reform from their accustomed niches, and refreshed his mind with the study of Gaelic and with the interest which his rambles in all directions stimulated in the names of places. The pleasant element of boy life was added now to the household, for he and Mrs Blackie had adopted Alexander Blackie, the son of his step-brother Gregory, whom in Göttingen days he had dubbed “the Pope.”

The ample kith and kin of Wylds and Blackies contributed troops of guests all summer, and from the kith and kin of election came choice spirits,



one by one, to season the table-talk with variety. But when the heats of August gave place to the mellow September weather, the impulse to movement stirred in him, and he started by steamer for Ballachulish. He had unwisely chosen a pair of boots on grounds of comfort, without due inspection of their soles. They lasted while he walked up Glencoe to King's House. Here he stayed over Sunday, and Monday being bright and clear, he determined to climb the Buchaillmore. Local opinion was against the adventure, and the landlord refused to supply him with a guide. The Ben was in the hands of the Sassenach deer-stalkers, and an interdict was upon it. But the Professor, if he feared God, certainly regarded not man, so, with the wonted stick in hand and a parting intimation to the gamekeeper that his name was John Stuart Blackie, and that he would answer in the Court of Session for his doings, he started for the top and won a cloudless view. Next day he climbed the Devil's Staircase to Kinloch-Leven, calling by the way on Campbell of Monzie, who entertained him with true Highland hospitality, and upon whose green home amongst the moors he was delivered of a sonnet.

Arrived at Fort William, he called upon the Fiscal, who, along with a hearty welcome and

some glasses of excellent port, gave him the information that he had received instructions to have him prosecuted for climbing Buchaillmore. Professor Tyndall was at Fort William, on his way to Oban, and joined him in a hearty laugh at the baffled deer-stalkers, whose attack expired in this letter. From Fort William he crossed the moor to Corpach, and after a night's rest started on a long tramp of twenty-three miles, broken at Glengarry for a talk with its chief, and at last reached Kinloch-Aylort, to discover at the little inn that one of his boots was falling to pieces, that the rain had begun, and that he was ten miles away from the nearest cobbler. No optimism could mend that boot nor overlook its yawning gaps; and when the sturdy handmaiden informed him that the coals were done and the peats soaking wet, and that he could not have a fire, he gave way to a brief despair. Here he was storm-stayed for two days, without fire and without books, and driven to the verge of his philosophy; but after a couple of tumblers of hot toddy, it proved equal to the emergency. Wrapped in his plaid, he walked to and fro to keep himself warm, wrote cheerful doggerel on the situation, and finally bought a thick woollen sock to draw over his dissolving boot, and so bind its fragments together.

Awful gusts of wind from the S.W. ; terrible splashes of rain on the window ; and a sea not fitted to be crossed ; so I must wend along the hard rocks of the coast in the face of the buffeting blast. But a man has no right to complain of evils into which he has deliberately plunged himself — evils, besides, that are amply compensated by all the pleasures of novelty and variety which a new country and new people supply.

From Arisaig he returned to Oban, by Moidart and Ardnamurchan, — “very pretty places in stormy weather.”

Lectures on the “Names of Places” followed in autumn, and he paid a flying visit to London late in November, to speak at the Festival gathering of the Scottish Corporation.

He began the year 1868 with a reprint of his pamphlet on Educational Reform. It was sent to his friends in Parliament, at the Universities, and in the Public Schools. The correspondence which it entailed and the composition of students’ songs seem to have been his chief extra-collegiate interests during the spring of that year. When the session ended, Mrs Blackie went to Altnacraig, leaving him in Edinburgh busy with an article for the ‘North British Review,’ on the Baroness Bunsen’s biography of her husband. This article was a memoir in itself, and expressed the profound admiration which he felt for the wise friend of his student days in Rome, the only man who

had been able directly to influence his character and conduct. When its proofs were corrected he followed his wife to Altnacraig, and resumed the study of Gaelic. But towards the end of June his restless feet led him hither and thither, — first to Mull, to find headquarters with Dr Cumming beside Loch Baa, and to explore thence all accessible bens and glens. He left the *Parva Domus* bent on a tour in the Orkney and Shetland Islands, and after visits to friends in Inverness and Tain, he achieved his purpose. He met with hearty hospitality, meditated at Stennis with the inevitable sonnets for outcome, weathered storms, noted the teeming sea-bird colonies on the northern cliffs, twanged his lyre to the Old Man of Hoy, left his card on John o' Groat, and returned to Oban about the end of August. Here he stayed all September, working at the fascinating subject of place-names inspired by the Orcadian itinerary, and corresponding with Mr Isaac Taylor, the chief authority in such research.

When October came to a close he returned to Edinburgh, and the new session was inaugurated by a lecture on Aristotle and his golden mean. He was meditating a rational method of familiarising his class with Greek,—one which he had practised for Latin at Aberdeen, and on which he had to some extent experimented already.

His good sense revolted now as ever against dull pedagogic systems, and demanded that Greek should be treated as a human language, capable of expressing human needs, moods, and conditions, and not confined to the uses of literature and science. A simple sentence of everyday greeting or news was turned into what Greek came handy to the class, was examined, corrected, and then committed to memory, and served as a foundation for the next day's experiment. This exercise preluded the morning's work, and has often been cited by his pupils as its most helpful portion. He now designed to expand it into conversation, and he busied himself during the winter in compiling a series of colloquies for this purpose. Besides this, he was occupied with the study of Aristotle, whose scheme of morals he compared with that of Socrates, and ultimately with that of Christ. The gospel of Utilitarianism was then vociferous, and confronted the antique gospels at almost every turn. Its quota of value had not yet been distilled from the mass, and for a time its pretensions were hostile to all that the spiritual enforced beyond the moral code. It is the limitation of human reformers that their insight and foresight are so engrossed with the positive conditions of life and circumstance that the power which shapes and reshapes

escapes their ken, and their elaborate systems, embodying all that they are gifted to recognise, fall short altogether a generation later. 'Truths remain to be garnered by the wise, but the framework proves to be mere husk and envelope, and falls off before the Eternal Spirit, whose fan is in His hand.

It was natural that Professor Blackie, whose faith in that Eternal Spirit was the strongest motive power in all that he thought and concluded, should be repelled by the pressure of Utilitarianism on the current thought and conclusion of the time, and we find him at first showing an instinctive aversion to its dogmas. Forced by the insistence of the new apostles to face these dogmas, he gave them a certain amount of study, which seems to belong to the years 1869 and 1870.

These matters are mentioned at this point merely as an indication of the bent taken by his thoughts during those winters. Of immediate moment was his correspondence early in 1869 on the pronunciation of Greek. This was extended to the Public Schools as well as to the Universities, and letters from eminent French and German scholars reached him in support of his views. To some of his correspondents he had mentioned his proposed 'Dialogues in Greek and

English,' and he received hearty encouragement from the most widely informed amongst them. A few sentences may be quoted from Mr Matthew Arnold's letter on this point :—

I entirely go along with your views as to the use of conversation in teaching Greek and Latin. When I was in Germany I heard the work of the highest class of a gymnasium frequently conducted in Latin; neither our masters nor our pupils would have been capable of the performance, which was most creditable. When I came to hear other lessons expressly given to extemporaneous Latin, I listened with unmixed satisfaction and approval, and have felt ever since how much we should gain by having something of the kind. What you say of the necessity of speaking a thing, and not only reading it, is most true, and directly applies here. I observe that boys at Harrow have incipient exercises in Latin sentences, *catch* constructions and expressions, and so on. I am convinced that these exercises, which are felt to be very mediæval and oppressive, would be quite lighted up by being made conversational. The object in view, that of teaching certain constructions, might be perfectly attained with the additional advantages of animating and interesting the boys, widening their vocabulary by giving them readiness in the use of it. I entirely wish you success, and remain always, dear Professor Blackie, very truly yours,

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

From Dr Temple, then headmaster of Rugby, came a more guarded approval, admitting, however, "that conversation is a powerful instrument in teaching any language"; but several of the

masters of Eton and Harrow expressed their cordial agreement with the addition of colloquial to clerical exercise.

In response to an invitation from the College of Preceptors, he went up to London in April to deliver a lecture upon the whole subject of the teaching of Greek and Latin, and this was printed in pamphlet form and spread abroad. He took advantage of the opportunity to revisit Harrow, and to visit Eton and Bradfield. This time he was admitted to all the classes at Harrow, and through the good offices of his genial host, Mr Oscar Browning, he gained an entrance to the classes at Eton. At Bradfield he was the guest of the headmaster, who sympathised with his reforms, and endeavoured to put them in practice. An attempt to interest the "kilted clergy" in his methods fell rather flat, these preoccupied personages excusing themselves with one consent. But correspondence brought to his knowledge the movement at Cambridge in favour of a rational pronunciation of Latin—a movement led by Professor Munro, and supported by the younger generation of scholars. A bright sojourn in London, his rushings hither and thither made easy by the Underground Railway, which he pronounced to be "the crowning luxury of the age," followed his visitation of the schools.



His warm interest in the Highlands of Scotland had secured him the privilege of honorary membership of the Highland Society of London, and on May 4 he dined with their brotherhood at St James's Hall on strictly Caledonian fare, the *pièce de résistance* a full-blown haggis, and the conviviality assisted by Highland whisky and Highland snuff. A surprise visit to his friends at Sudbrooke Park followed the round of festivities in town, and on May 21 he went to Oxford to visit Professor Thorold Rogers. His host was a subject of interesting study.

Grandly and imperiously a Radical, with not a bit of toleration for anything connected with family or Church aristocracy. He flings his denunciations about so sharply that the clerical element everywhere naturally bristles into hostility against him. He is *in* Oxford, not *of* Oxford.

From Oxford he went to visit the Dobells near Gloucester, and thence to Wales to pay some visits in Caermarthenshire. Here Welsh hospitality and the opportunity of learning something of the language delayed him at Dolaucothy a fortnight beyond the time which he had planned, and he wrote humorous apologies to his Penelope at Altnacraig to beg indulgence for her Ulysses, held in bondage to a kind Welsh Calypso who taught his stammering tongue to master her

vocables. A short stay with the head of the Theological College at Lampeter brought this Welsh excursion to an end without further invasion of the Celtic Principality, but he carried away with him a warm recollection of the hosts and hostesses who had stayed his feet on its threshold.

He returned to Edinburgh by Liverpool, and found there a budget of letters from schoolmasters throughout the kingdom full of thanks for his lecture on the "Teaching of Languages." Along with these was one from Mr John Marshall, to whom he had awarded a travelling scholarship for one year, a prize which he gave to the best student in his Greek class. Mr Marshall wrote from Göttingen, where he was busied with the summer term much as the Professor had been forty years earlier. To the gain harvested in his *Wanderjahre* was due the form of this prize, and he encouraged all those of his students able to afford such an "extra" to seek the enlarging and qualifying uses of foreign travel.

By the middle of June he reached Altnacraig, and for about two months settled to its tranquillity and to the enjoyment of its shifting circle of guests. In his turret-study he devoted the mornings to Socrates and Aristotle, and to the company of the Seven Sages of Greece. The

afternoons were spent upon the upland moors with the jocund Muse, who furnished him with rhyme and reason for his Students' Songs: at four o'clock he returned to the heather-cushioned cliff, where on sunny days the home-circle was trysted for tea. Visitors, native to the soil or pausing on the wing northwards, found their way to the chosen spot, and many a gleeful surprise welcomed his return from the moors, with his hands full of grass-of-Parnassus in July and of white heather in August. He knew the haunts of the white heather, and although liberal with his spoils, he would not betray their hiding-place. Amongst the guests might be found the Catholic Bishop of Argyle and The Isles, now Archbishop of Edinburgh—Dr Walter C. Smith, Dr MacGregor, Sir Noël Paton, Dr Robertson Smith,—men of all Christian creeds, but all of one Christian charity. Sometimes the little party took boat and crossed to the Lady's Rock or to Heather Island for tea, and the kettle was set on an improvised fire helped by dry kindling-wood from the house, and while it delayed to boil he read aloud some legend of the place, or some lay of St Columba, or perhaps some rattling lines of frolic or defiance which Musa Burschicosa had lilted on the moor.

It was about this time that Mr Kingdon Clifford

came to Oban, one of a reading-party from Oxford, "a pale, thin, sinewy youngster," who learned to haunt Altnacraig. He was as nimble as the Professor, and understood many mysteries unknown to the older man, amongst them rope-dancing and unnumbered card-tricks. The readers no doubt read all day, for they rambled at night; and one memorable evening they left their impedimenta in the porch, hats, shoes, stockings, coats, and vests,—their money and watches loose in the pockets,—and disappeared on the moorland. The discovery of this deposit alarmed the Altnacraig household, which sat up till midnight without sign of their return. But in the morning the vestments had vanished, and they had tidings of the footsore wanderers, who had too rashly ventured over heather, bog, and rock with feet unshod, and had crawled back at the rate of a mile an hour!

About the middle of August the blue hills of Mull drew the Professor across to Tusculum beside Loch Baa. Here he spent a few days with Dr Cumming, and was taught to play bagatelle by Lord Colin Campbell. A lecture at Tobermory divided his visit into two parts, and the latter half was given to a geological study of Loch Baa and its shores. This absence from Oban led to his missing ex-President Jefferson Davis,

who was the occasion of some pleasant parties given by Mr Hutcheson on board the excursion steamers.

When he returned from Mull it was to find the proofs of 'Musa Burschicosa' at Altnacraig, and September was devoted to their correcting. The little book was published in October, and it was dedicated to the students of Edinburgh University, to whom he described the songs as "the offspring of a pure spirit of enjoyment of life."

It is interesting to find appreciative letters from Mr Gladstone, Lord President Inglis, Sir Douglas Maclagan, himself a songster in the same bright vein, and Lord Neaves, noted for his lays of good-fellowship. Of the collection, the "Song of Good Greeks" and the "Song of Geology" were most liked. The latter had been submitted to Professors Tyndall and Ramsay for correction, and both had delighted in its vivacity. Professor Ramsay had taken much pains with its scientific terminology, and the stanzas represent the order of development known to geologists a generation ago. The poet himself looked upon this as one of his best efforts in rhyme.

At the beginning of the new session he was ailing, and had to be contented for a few weeks with his normal work. But the new year 1870 found

him championing the cause of the lady students in the Edinburgh University, and protesting both in speech and letter against the shabby conduct of their opponents. He was busy, too, inviting fresh fellowship into the Blackie Brotherhood, of which, at the January celebration, Sir Alexander Grant and Mr Brodie the sculptor were made members.

The winter wore to an end, busy and convivial, as Edinburgh winters were then,—his studies on Socrates, Aristotle, and the Utilitarians taking shape in his mind, while his summer impressions were being matured into convictions on the crofter question, on the value of the Gaelic language, and on subjects bound up with these, which were destined to bear practical fruit in due time.

By the end of April he was on the wing for London, halting at Manchester to greet an ardent reformer of classical pronunciation. He delivered four lectures on Socrates, Aristotle, Christianity, and Utilitarianism at afternoon meetings of the Royal Institution, as well as an evening lecture on "Mythology," in which he opposed the extravagance of the new school, whose leaders referred every polytheistic, heroic, or nursery myth to the episodes in the sun's diurnal course. Many pleasant social events made his prolonged stay in town memorable, and he referred to it in after-

years as the most interesting of all his visits to London.

He breakfasted twice with Mr Gladstone, made the acquaintance of Mr John Morley, Sir John Bowring, Mr J. A. Froude, and Mr Tom Taylor, and revisited the friends of earlier years, amongst them Carlyle, Dr Hodgson, and the Kinglakes. His headquarters were first with his brother-in-law, Mr Edward Wyld, at Holland Park, and then with Mr and Mrs Archer in Phillimore Gardens, but he paid flying visits to his relatives at Stepney and elsewhere. At Mr Gladstone's he met Dr Hawkins, the head of Oriel, who came to hear his lecture on Mythology.

Happily [he wrote] there was nothing against Oxford in the lecture, only a dash at Max Muller, of whom I spoke with the utmost respect and love.

He described a Sunday's adventures early in May :—

I went to hear Jowett in the forenoon at a Broad Church in Marylebone. The sermon was from Acts x. 34 and 35, a regular Broad Church text, as broad as the world, and by the learned preacher made to include the Vedic Hymns, Zoroaster, Buddha, Socrates, Plato, Epictetus, what not—very instructive. At the door of the church we shook hands with Jowett, "Ecce Homo," Talmud Deutsch, and other notabilities. Thereafter I lunched quietly with Mrs Gregory in her wee house at 21 Green

Street, and at 3 P.M. went with her to a conference of spiritualists, where, as a matter of course, the Pro. spoke—not on spirits, however, or ghosts, but on Agrarian Laws and the Division of Property! In the evening I went to hear Baboo Chunder Sen, who chose pretty much the same text, and enlarged in the fashionable style on Toleration, Charity, and no opinions in particular. He speaks fluently enough, but has little variety either in matter or manner, and will never be a great orator. I was introduced to him after sermon, and gave him a friendly invitation to Altnacraig.

On May 17 he took railway to Richmond, and marched full speed up Richmond Hill, and when I got to the top saw the broad fields of infinite foliage spread out to the west, the silver Thames at my feet, and the royal trees of the Park on my left hand. I then entered through the open gate of Pembroke Lodge. You guess now that my object was to look on Lady Amberley's blithe face. They were out in the grounds; so I took a ramble, and in case of losing my game went along whistling "Can' ye by Atholl?" which discovered the bird, and out they all came, Lady Russell, Lady Amberley, and her lord. I had a pleasant walk with them, and then a cup of tea within doors. Instead of passing the gay season here, they are going to Rodborough, near Stroud, "to work," as she said—that is, to pursue their studies. I made full utterance to them on important subjects, and felt quite happy in their company. The weather is now splendid, the most glorious poetry of nature and of art combined: such is London when you know how to use it, and take things quietly and piously.

The constant racket became fatiguing towards



the end of May, and he went to Cambridge for a few days, an honoured guest at Trinity, where he met, under Mr Clark's auspices, all that was noteworthy in the University and the town. The reformation in Latin pronunciation effected by Professor Munro was of much moment to him, and he listened with delight to an oration by the Public Orator, voiced as he had advocated for forty years. Except this, Mrs Augusta Webster made most impression upon him, her aims and attainments in Greek exciting his interest: the acquaintance ripened to a pleasant correspondence and the gift of his 'Homer' to the poetess.

A visit to Bedford for the sake of John Bunyan, and a few days' quiet in Hampshire with relatives, restored him to his normal activity, and early in June he went to Marlborough College to visit Dr Bradley, and then to Gloucestershire to pay Mr and Mrs Dobell the visit which they had negotiated the summer before. It seems to have been a very pleasant one, and included an excursion of the trio to Rodborough to visit the Amberleys. Little inclined as was Professor Blackie to spend time on works of fiction, he found himself inspired during this visit to read 'Lothair,' which had just come out—rather for the sake of its author, into whose marvellously compacted character he hoped in some measure to penetrate, than for the

sake of the story. But the book fascinated him, and he went steadily through its three volumes. He commented in a letter, dated June 15, as follows :—

I have finished 'Lothair,' and am most gratified with it, and greatly surprised too; for my prepossession was strong against the author. It is a wise and a true and a noble book. It is not only a picture of London life in high circles, but something far better; it is a wise solution of the most vexed religious and philosophical questions of the day. The theology is particularly good—perhaps I think so because it is substantially my own. In this work Disraeli has nobly vindicated the divine right of the Semitic element in the history of human culture without doing injustice to other elements. Hellenism and Hebraism here play their just parts.

Later in the year he made this opinion public in a letter addressed to the editor of the 'Scotsman,' and printed in its issue of November 1. This came under Disraeli's notice, and he expressed himself as highly gratified by so discerning an interpretation of the spirit of 'Lothair.' The letter was republished in Messrs Longman's "Notes on Books."

He was back at Altnacraig by June 22, and busied himself once more with the study of Gaelic, taking up 'Ossian' in the original, and corresponding with Highland ministers and schoolmasters about its translation. An occupation of

lighter character was the composition of his 'Lays of the Highlands and Islands.' Some of his best poetical work is in this volume, which was not published till 1872, although most of its sonnets, songs, and lays were in existence already. The Orcadian excursion had supplied some of them; his visits to Mull had suggested nine of the best; Ben Cruachan, the Buchaillmore, King's House, Glencoe, Taynuilt, and Oban had each its rhymed recognition. These lay unsorted as yet, and when August came and the "spirit in his feet" grew restive, he took steamer to Iona, and settled at the Columba Inn for ten days, to penetrate into every nook amongst its barrows and every sand-strewn crescent on its shores. The Duke of Argyll's book on the holy island of Columba had just been published, and formed, with Adamnan's Life of the saint, his guide to all its shrines. He was much refreshed by this complete abandonment to the solitude and associations of Iona, and wrote the poems called "The Voyage" and "The Death of Columba" while under their spell. A Sunday ramble—after the hallowed sacramental service, held in the open air upon the spot where Jesus was first preached to Hebridean islanders—led him to the north side of Iona, and he climbed Dun Ee, whose wonderful outlook, which reaches

to the cones of Cuchullin in Skye, inspired one of his noblest sonnets, ending—

Here rather follow me, and take thy stand

By the grey cairn that crowns the lone Dun Ee,  
And let thy breezy worship be the grand

Old Bens and old grey knolls that compass thee,  
The sky-blue waters and the snow-white sand,  
And the quaint isles far-sown upon the sea.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## PILGRIM YEARS.

1870-1872.

A TOUCH of vertigo bewilders us as we try to follow the Professor through the maze of interwoven activities which he so nimbly threaded during these years. We enter upon a period of cession to the interest of the moment, of suspense from concentrated effort, of varied study, of enjoyment, acquisition, expansion. The pressure of life had relaxed for a time ; Commissions and Parliaments relieved him from the strain of lifting up his voice in the unredeemed wilderness of education ; he scarcely cared to swell the chorus, the burden of whose song he had manfully raised. For some years, therefore, we are concerned with a multitude of matters, important and purposely useful, but demanding no longer the strenuous heroism

of earlier tasks. Something of abandonment to personal enjoyment may be discovered in this period, involving work, social life, travel, and study in temperate proportions.

The level is broken by one stirring enterprise, to which he was impelled partly by circumstances, partly by the influence of his summer studies, ungoaded by professional demands. These had necessarily supplied much of the stimulus to his *Æschylean* and *Homeric* labours, but their claims were satisfied, and he was free—in his own words—“to let things take their natural course.”

The Franco-German war of 1870-71 engaged his interest to a degree seldom effected by political occurrences, which he generally disregarded. Two impulses accounted for this, both personal to himself. These were the fighting instinct, which in his case was rather mental than physical, and the part which German influence had played in his education. War was always attractive to him, whether past or present. He had accepted the theory of its value both for individuals and for nations, and his enthusiasm for the war-makers seems, at this distance of time, to border on extravagance. His sympathies were wholly German. Germany was the native country of his mind and of its nurture, and a constant cur-

rent of filial and patriotic fervour repaid the debt which his heart acknowledged.

He knew little or nothing of the French. Misled by the tawdry triumphs of the Third Empire, he mistook for that industrious, thrifty, brave, enduring, ingenious nation, the hysterical *mêlée* of its worst elements then in the capital. And since all his emotions had to get themselves into rhyme and stanza, he busied himself in autumn, during rambles on the Oban heights, with a collection of 'War-songs from the German,' which was published towards the end of the year, and appropriately dedicated to Thomas Carlyle, the apostle of strength.

The songs go thundering along [wrote his old friend] with a furious tramp of battle in them; and I suppose, if one could sing, would be very musical and heart-inspiring. I especially applaud the clear and vigorous historical summary, which will be instructive to so many dark people here at home. As for the Dedication, what can I say but drop a veil over my blushing face and answer by expressive silence! Good be with you always, dear Blackie."

A copy of the little book was accepted by the Queen, and he had the further honour of presenting one to the Crown Princess of Germany.

The composition of the historical introduction, which reviewed the first Napoleon's outrages upon Germany, wound him up to a resolve that he

would see for himself the triumphal return of the German troops to Berlin in the summer of 1871.

The session over, the cause of the lady students duly defended, the inclusion of the burgh schools in the new scheme of educational reform rather impatiently handled, and other matters dismissed, he started for London on April 19, took up his familiar quarters at Phillimore Gardens for ten days, and fired off a rousing lecture on War to a Sunday evening audience. He lectured at the Royal Institution as well at a Friday evening function, and seems to have ventured on the burning topic of Darwinism in the presence of its luminaries. But the vicissitudes of species were not "far ben" in his thoughts, and after a whirl of dinners he sailed for Antwerp on the last day of the month.

To see Germany in its hour of triumph; to penetrate its mood; to learn the *pros* and *cons* of this stupendous change, as they were in the vernacular, not in the crude transcripts and shallow versions which reached the English ear; to know how historians and philosophers and the men of thought regarded this *avatar* of the men of action; to see the men of action themselves,—these were the purposes which moved him.

He rested at Cologne for a day and a night, and then dropped in on Professor Bernays at



Bonn, to sip Rhine wine "and to hold all sorts of profound and profitable disputations about English Philosophy and German Politics" for two hours.

A "wander" to the Drachenfels and up some of the peaks at its back gratified his restless feet next day, and sent him back to Bonn fatigued enough for his content. The day after he visited Bunsen's grave, in the same churchyard as that of Moritz Arndt. It was a shrine for the Professor, who, growing old, felt his heart glow with gratitude to Providence, who had "led his blind unpractised foot to great-souled Bunsen." Upon the headstone he read, "Let us walk in the light of the Eternal"—a message from that pure spirit who had attained above what he sought below.

"Thoughts of Bunsen and Arndt sink deep, and are the most profitable of meditations," he wrote; and his pondering by their graves was shaped into a sonnet.

A shrine less holy attracted him to Cassel, and he took train up the lovely Lahnthal to reach it. This was Wilhelmshöhe, about three miles from the little city on the Fulda. He strolled through the palace grounds and gay saloons, inspected the mark of Louis Napoleon's half-burned cigars upon his writing-table, no venerable relic of the captivity, gossiped about the captive's looks and

occupations with the castellan, and packed his reflections into a couple of sonnets as he loitered back to Cassel. They record a man and a doom all unheroic, and are wasted ingenuity.

Göttingen and a new professoriate claimed his next sojourn, which lasted a week. During this time Dr Pauli was his hospitable entertainer, and the student of forty-four years earlier found himself a lion in the scene of his first aspirations after academic dignity. He attended lectures with diligence, was anew smitten with wrath at the immense gap between the matured learning of the German and the scrambling pedagogy of the Scottish Universities, and was increasingly impressed with the essential goodness and rationality of German scholars. One little criticism he ventured to make, which indicates a change in himself of which he was doubtless unaware. He liked their homeliness less than in his student days, and would have preferred "some show of manners and external presentation." From his host he gained much information with regard to the great historical epoch in progress, and with the help of German books on public questions, he was strengthened in his natural leaning towards the Prussian side of the whole question.

From Göttingen he branched off to Luther's country, visited Eisleben and Wittenberg, meet-

ing at the former place a train of French soldiers released and returning to France, and at the latter outbreking into the regulation fourteen lines on the twin Reformers of Germany. Even more immediately impressive than their dust were the graves of 150 Frenchmen, the toll left to death by the contingent of prisoners who had just been released. On this monument of unutterable sorrow he laid a tribute of tears—better than the unshapen verses, which failed to express his real emotion.

Berlin was the goal of this journey, and his object was not to see the city but to see the Emperor, Bismark, and Moltke. Of the three, Bismark was naturally the most magnetic; and although he did not attain to the honour of an introduction to him, he was enabled by the good offices of Mr George Bunsen to attend the sittings of the Diet, and both to see and hear the Chancellor. The story tells best in his own words:—

On Friday, about 2 P.M., I went down the Leipziger Strasse to the Parliament House, and took my seat in the Strangers' Gallery. The bench on the opposite side of the House, which is occupied by members of the Upper House—who sit along with the Lower House, only not voting—was as usual almost empty; and I looked for Bismark in vain. Only Moltke sat amid the Lower House throng, as quiet and meditative as an English professor. Shortly, however, turning my eye again to

the Bench of Magnates, I found the central seat occupied by a broad-chested, commanding-looking figure, whom I more than half recognised, and who turned out to be Bismark. He sat more than half an hour signing papers and spending a few significant sentences on those who sat near; then he sent across the House a note to the Speaker, by which I guessed that he had some intimation to make to the House. And so it was. This was good luck, to hear the most powerful man in Europe open his mouth, and see how he opened it. So the Neptunian-breasted hero arose, and looked exactly like the one man who had a right to command everybody there; nevertheless, what he said was given forth in a very quiet, modest way, being, in fact, only an intimation that the Peace had been signed at Versailles, and that he had been ordered by the King to depart immediately for Frankfort to set his final seal to the business there. This was the whole; only I saw him quite close on the street afterwards, with his military cloak, and with his white cuirassier cap on his head, as if he wished to keep down his lofty presentment as much as possible by a humble top-piece.

A descriptive sonnet expressed the Professor's homage, and this was forwarded to the great Chancellor, with what effect is not recorded.

Hearing that the triumphal return of the Prussian army to Berlin would not take place till the middle of June, Professor Blackie decided to utilise the intervening weeks in a rapid survey of St Petersburg and Moscow,—a plan which he had made at the outset, but reserved for favour-

ing occasion, as it was secondary to his main intentions. He left Berlin on May 23 for Königsberg, where a halt refreshed him for the further journey, ended on the 26th. He had letters of introduction to the English Ambassador, Sir Andrew Buchanan, and to the Consul; and these gentlemen provided him with a week's social experiences, while by dint of diligent map-study and of a native faculty for the points of the compass, he filled his mornings with sight-seeing, unhelped and unhindered by companionship. He dined one day with Count Orloff Davidoff, who had been a student in Edinburgh forty-five years earlier, a member of the Greek class under Professor Dunbar; and he was permitted to be a spectator of a very brilliant procession at Tsarkoe-Selo, described in a letter to his wife:—

You must understand there was yesterday a grand display here on occasion of the baptism of one of the Imperial babies; and I got a letter from the Minister of Education to Prince Galitzin, the Master of Ceremonies, and drove out in the railway with a whole host of princes, grafs, generals, and generalissimos to the Palace of Tsarkoe-Selo, fifteen miles to the south. Prince Galitzin could not get me into the chapel where the royal baby was baptised, but he got me an excellent station in the lobby of the Palace, where I looked out from behind a glass door right in front of a long gallery, down which the Emperor and all the procession of notables came after the baptism to refresh their imperial mortality with a

little lunch. I had two princesses beside me to prevent any appearance of improper humiliation. I wished you had been there fully to appreciate not only the general splendour, as I did, but the beauty of the details. I never saw such a show, well worth a journey of some two or three thousand miles.

From the northern capital he travelled early in June to Moscow, where good fortune awaited him in the form of an old student of his own, already an experienced Muscovite, and now the most distinguished of our authorities on matters of internal Russian polity, Sir Daniel Mackenzie Wallace. Together they visited the lions of Moscow, inspecting the "jewelled religiosity" of its churches, the marvellous view from the Kremlin, and the huge Foundling Hospital with its strange statistics. In the Cathedral the animated, rapid, inquiring figure of the Professor roused curiosity in the worshippers, and they crowded after him, and raised a report in the newspapers that he was Monsieur Jules Favre.

By June 5 his glance at Moscow was over, and he was on his way back, by moor, fen, and forest, to St Petersburg, where he wandered about the city till he knew its streets as well as he knew Old Edinburgh. A week later he fled from its banquets and palaces, its cloisters and splendours,

to Warsaw, where he rested on his way back to Berlin.

The triumphal entry was fixed for June 16. He was invited to stay with Mr and Mrs George Bunsen, and saw the procession from a comfortable seat, which cost him three dollars. "It was a wonderful sight," he wrote, "to see billow after billow of armed warriors coming out of the Linden and spreading to a glittering ocean in the great open square." The decorations, the masses of well-satisfied Berlineese, the illuminations, all contributed to the blaze of the moment, and completed this festival of a new empire, for which the mourning mothers of Germany had paid the reckoning.

The spectacle well over, Professor Blackie went home by Hamburg and Leith, with his mind full of memories. "What I have seen," he said, "will require a whole summer to digest." His health was affected by fatigue and by the bad weather, which dogged his steps up to the last, although the sun shone on the procession. An ailment, which had long been in abeyance, irritated his skin and obliged him to take medicine. The "thorn in the flesh" he called it, and it persisted throughout the two months of his absence from home.

Mrs Blackie was at Altnacraig, and after a few

days spent in Edinburgh, collecting books upon the political problem of the Franco-German war, he followed her thither. He left orders with his publisher to forward copies of 'Homer' to the friends in Berlin and St Petersburg whose hospitalities he so much enjoyed; and before starting for Oban he bought a bulky parcel of white-fox-glove seed, to be sowed by his own hand in all the nooks and crannies of his rocky domain.

He found Mrs Blackie far from well. She was suffering from nervous depression, to which she had become more than ever prone, and which robbed her of much enjoyment and made this summer in the Highlands a toilsome round of housekeeping cares and duties. At the best of times catering in Oban was difficult before the railway reached so far, and to keep a house full of visitors supplied in all the dainty variety and hospitable fulness which were her delight taxed even *her* ingenuity.

Her husband consulted his books, refreshed his leisure with Ossian and the history of clan badges, and corrected the proofs of 'Four Phases of Morals,' a book which gave to the reading public the amended and amplified substance of his lectures on Socrates, Aristotle, Christianity, and Utilitarianism, delivered the year before in London. In commemoration of their original



purpose the Professor dedicated the book to Sir Henry Holland, President of the Royal Institution. Its issue dated about the end of October 1871, and the book met with wide acceptance: an edition appeared in New York during the following year, and a second issue was called for in 1874.

This work stands amongst its author's most popular, vigorous, and characteristic efforts. He was at home on Socrates and Aristotle, and we are justified in expecting from him the lucid and large-minded estimate which he gives of these Hellenic apostles of truth and moderation. But his chapter on Christianity had an even greater value at the time of its publication, as correlating the new law of Christian love with the needs and longings articulate in the best minds of the ancient world, and as contrasting with the failures of man's many religious inventions the divine force for salvation born again into the world to conquer the world only so far as it is permitted a free course.

Perhaps the lecture on Utilitarianism betrays the rash courage of a free-lance, undisciplined to the onset and the brunt of orderly attack, and resenting more by instinct than conviction conclusions which the teachers of its school have left exposed to such attack. It needs more than

the spelling out of sundry books upon the subject to furnish a mind emphatically antagonistic with arguments which can lay bare the insufficient area of utilitarian postulates and the deliberate exaggeration of their practical philosophy.

The materialistic nightmare [wrote Mr Froude] will disappear, as it has disappeared before. It has its periods as comets have, but you do excellently well to call it by its right name.<sup>1</sup>

Another literary labour of this autumn was a revisal of his translation of 'Faust,' and his morning's achievement was read to the fireside circle in the evening,—a circle often widened by sympathetic outsiders.

In a letter written to his Aunt Manie—now a very old lady, but in full possession of her faculties, and living in Edinburgh with Miss Christina Blackie—he dilates on the comforts of Altnacraig :—

The sun is dominant, with occasional whiffs of rain sufficient to encourage vegetation but not to prevent perambulation : inside all is taste, elegance, and grace, the natural fair effect of the fair cause who has organised the establishment. It is worth while coming here if but

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<sup>1</sup> This and other quotations from the letters of Mr J. A. Froude to Professor Blackie are made by kind permission of Mr Froude's executors.

to feel the comfort of the circular, velvet-bottomed chairs which furnish forth the drawing-room. These chairs by their circular form indicate a feeling of security out of which a man cannot be shaken, and by their softness produce a sensation of comfort to which it is impossible to imagine that Olympus with its couches of rosy clouds contains anything more luxurious. We have a henhouse made by Mr Ross in the most fashionable style of rusticity, in which there are at the present moment eight fighting cocks and two hens! Every morning at breakfast we eat huge turkey-eggs, and in the evening we make ourselves comfortable with whisky toddy and a fine blazing fire from logs cut out of the thinnings of the large and rich forest which surrounds us. Oh! what you lose by not coming to Altnacraig!

The winter session passed without more than the usual quota of social events, of which the presence of Dean Stanley at a meeting of the Hellenic, and a visit from "Orion,"—both celebrities having come to lecture at the Philosophical Institution,—are most worthy to be noted.

Many of the letters which the Professor received were from Highlanders at home and abroad, whose love and admiration were setting towards him in a current unstinted and almost uninterrupted to the end of his life. He loved what they loved—the mighty Bens, the peat-brown torrents, the open moors, the fragrant forests of birch and pine and fir. And above

all, he loved the clachan and the croft, and cared to smell the pungent reek of the cotter's fire, and to learn from the cotter's lips the names for all needs of home and husbandry. He loved their language, its literature, its legends old as the myths of Rome, its tender homeliness "shot" with the gold of imagination. He denounced their wrongs, and his heart bled for their exile: what wonder that they loved him?

The talk in spring 1872 was of 'Olrig Grange' and the mystery of its authorship, not impenetrable to the Professor, who had paid just assignment of tribute towards the end of April, when he was due in London.

He travelled thither in beguiling intercourse with a Sanskrit grammar, finding welcome at his brother-in-law's house in Holland Park. His lecture at the Royal Institution was delivered on April 26, and was devoted to the "History and Growth of Modern Greek." Amongst his auditors was Cardinal Manning, who had written to him on the subject of the 'Four Phases of Morals' as follows:—

Your lecture pleased me greatly from its indignant Theism. What are we doing? We are letting a handful of men talk Atheism, and "their tongue goeth through the world." And our men of culture are reviving gnosticism and sophistry. I rejoice, therefore, when any one speaks to them as you do.

The Professor met the Cardinal after the lecture, and they had an interesting talk.

Between Manning and me there exists a wonderful sympathy in our views of English philosophy since Locke. The agreement consists simply in this, that we prefer Socrates and St Paul to Bentham and Hume, and consider the English generally as not a thinking people.

A lunch with the Cardinal followed shortly.

We got on swimmingly ; he says my book is written in excellent English, and always clear and distinct, and he sympathises with my Theism and with my Aristotelian sanity.

He breakfasted with Mr Gladstone on May 9, when, the conversation being long, I did not get away till 11.30. He was very frank and agreeable. There were present only the family, a Lord Noël, and a beautiful little creature, very eloquent about the law of copyright, about which I professed myself very careless. She lectured both Gladstone and me in a very charming style on the subject. But I am not the man to enter into an agitation because a pretty woman asks me.

His quarters were changed to Green Street, where he found himself in the heart of a spiritualistic circle, and wasted some time on lectures and seances occupied with the hysterical futilities of the craft.

I hear strange talk about these spirits every day, but sit quietly keeping myself apart from them and their ways. I have schooled myself to be perfectly content

with what reason can teach me, and feel comfortable only in an atmosphere of sobriety and intelligibility.

He must have invited Carlyle to be present at one of these foolish functions, for a scrap of paper records the indignant sage's refusal.

No, a thousand times no! Spiritualism = Ultra-Brutalism and Liturgy of Apes by the Dead Sea! Let not such things be once named among you!

### The Professor

walked down to Chelsea, and spent two agreeable hours with the grey old prophet and his brother. As usual, he laid about him all round. However, we managed to get on, as he was willing to take all the talk to himself. On departure he gave me a nice present of the two big volumes of his 'Apprenticeship and Travels of Wilhelm Meister,' with an inscription in his own hand.

A whirl of breakfast and dinner parties absorbed him to the end of May,—with Mr Froude, Mr Haweis, Mrs Thistlethwayte, Mr Stopford Brooke, Mr Tom Taylor, Lady Burdett Coutts, and many others. It was a relief to pay a quiet visit to Dr and Mrs Kennedy at Stepney, after which he went for a week to Phillimore Gardens, to stay with Mr and Mrs Archer, in a home always congenial to him, where the interests were real and not feverish, and where the "sweet influences" of art and nature calmed and enriched the social life.

Mr Archer was invalided, and sent his guest to represent him at the Artists' Fund Dinner.

Prinsep made a telling speech, and the Pro. also came off with flying colours. I had not the least intention of making a speech, but the health of the strangers and visitors having been put on the programme, my name was specialised, perhaps as the most talkative, and I certainly did not find it difficult to make them feel that a Scotch Professor can speak English as well as spell Greek. I saw Millais, Graham, the Faeds, President Grant, and many more.

In the intervals left by his social engagements he kept several appointments with Mr Isbister, to whom he had submitted the MS. of the 'Lays of the Highlands and Islands.' That gentleman liked the poems, and proposed that those on St Columba should first appear in 'Good Words,' and afterwards take their place in a volume, which he was willing to prepare for issue in time for the tourists' season. The Professor undertook to write a preface serviceable as an itinerary to those tourists who cared to see the Highlands in the spirit of their historic and romantic associations, and this work occupied his mornings after leaving town.

Perhaps his final fling there was a second breakfast with Mr Gladstone.

We had Tom Taylor, Lord Lyttelton, Lord Houghton, and an artistical gentleman called Pennington, who de-

claimed very well one of Macaulay's ballads; also Knowles, an architect. I forgathered specially with Lord Lyttelton, who is Hellenistic.

He went to Oxford on June 1, but except a talk with Mr Jowett and a dinner with Dr Bradley, had little to record of an uninteresting visit, and left, after two days' stay at the Mitre Inn, for Nailsworth in Gloucestershire, and the hospitalities of his friends Mr and Mrs Dobell. He found them both in frail health, but "dainty, delicate, saintly, odd, and altogether original." He was storm-stayed part of the time.

The weather continues Obanesque: much wind, much rain, many clouds, little sunshine, and no heat. Who could have thought of such an exhibition of the elemental Old Adam here?

The 'Times' of June 18 brought him the sorrowful tidings of Dr Norman Macleod's death. "It is a blow to my soul. To think that Scotland should thus have her noblest son struck down." His "Itinerary" was finished, and already proof-sheets of the 'Lays' pursued him on his pilgrimage. He left for Gloucester, where he lectured and was lionised, and whence he journeyed to Exeter, inspected the Cathedral there, and took train for Truro. Here he made his headquarters in the Red Lion Inn for some days, and the spell



of bad weather being over, footed it merrily through Cornwall, "jumping about from shore to shore," and returning to his nest again. On one of these excursions he walked twenty-seven miles within the limits of twelve hours, resting during three of the twelve.

Wales and Ireland had been included in his plan for this summer, but both had to be given up, as he was expected at Inverness early in July, and had, besides, to keep within a reasonable distance from his publisher's office. So he returned to Gloucester, where his host, Dr Evans, received him with enthusiasm, the staid proprieties of the little city having been pleased to approve of the frolicsome old gentleman, whose snowy locks and academic reputation mediated successfully for his unconventional deportment.

Neither I nor any one else [wrote Dr Evans to Mr Dobell] ever saw or heard the like before; his ways are as endless and startling as his learning and eloquence, and make him only the more taking and attractive. He fascinates without flattery, and tells the truth without offence.

From Gloucester to Edinburgh, from Edinburgh to Oban, and from Oban to Inverness, formed the next sequence of flights, and returning by the Caledonian Canal, he wrote an account of his doings to his aunt, Miss Manie Stodart. Most of his letters to her were written on board

one or other of the Highland steamers, and this one is dated Gondolier, Fall of Foyers, July 13 :—

I have spent a very pleasant week in Inverness. I harangued several splendid audiences on *Gaelic*, and *Nationality*, and *Depopulation*, and came off with volleys of applause; but I wish not only to entertain, but to stir up noble ideas that will fructify. Besides speechification, we had Highland songs, and Highland dances, and a Gaelic oration from one of the ministers. Then there was the great Inverness wool-market, and a display of brawny figures. To be altogether in the element, I went to the dinner in the afternoon; there I felt myself, strange enough, sitting at the right hand of Highland lairds and Highland M.P.’s.

In August the ‘Lays of the Highlands and Islands’ appeared, dedicated to Lady Burdett Coutts, and receiving a welcome from the public, expressed in many letters, amongst them appreciative thanks from Professor Campbell Shairp, Sir Andrew Ramsay, Sir Theodore Martin, Dr Halley, and, of exceptional interest, from Charles Edward d’Albanie, one of the Sobieski Stuarts well known in Scotland during the early half of the century. Some sentences may be quoted from the first and last of these letters.

MY DEAR BARD [wrote Professor Campbell Shairp from Aberfeldy],—Thank you very much for sending me your ‘Lays.’ Coming at this golden time of the year, there

is less leisure to read them carefully, as I have been all day long on the hills, and only have time to look at them when I come in tired in the evening. Still I have dipped into some of the shorter ones, and find a fine, breezy exhalation in them. They are certainly like yourself, and that is a main thing. The longer poems I shall keep for closer reading, when, in your own words, late September makes us

“Heap up the logs and trim the lamp, and bring  
Our winter friends, our long-neglected books.”

Sobieski Stuart wrote in warm acknowledgment of verses which recalled to him the many Bens of Scotland,

upon which I have often slept, and from their summits seen the sun rise or sink. The poetry in which you have described these scenes fills me with delight and admiration. You have sent forth the feelings of a mind—elevated above the world, like the mountains which you describe lifting their foreheads towards heaven—filled with glory and gratitude to Him, God! the Creator; and it fills my heart with profound consolation to feel that there are still in this age of unbelief some illustrious and kindred spirits to shine forth like the sun in Satan’s face.

Towards the end of August the Professor went to Aberfeldy to pay Dr and Mrs Kennedy a short visit, and amongst the movements of the party there may be noted the ascent of Schiehallion in company with Professor Campbell Shairp and Mr Milne Home, “a stout old geologist engaged in a hunt for boulders.” A visit to Ardgour, and a

fall in one of the rocky glens which his restless feet explored, brought this summer's adventures to a close, and he had to nurse a sprained ankle at Altnacraig until October, when he left for Edinburgh.

Soon after his return to Hill Street he received a gratifying letter from the East. The lecture on "Modern Greek" delivered in April at the Royal Institution had been noticed with cordial appreciation in the 'Neologos,' a Greek journal published at Constantinople, whose editors requested Mr John Gennadius to procure the address in its entirety, and to translate it into modern Greek for the benefit of their readers. The father of this gentleman had believed in and had taught the vitality of ancient Greek and its identity with the modern language, notwithstanding a vanishing foreign element and some provincial corruption in the latter. The son had inherited his father's faith, and now welcomed the Professor's advocacy of a rational view not merely of the development of modern from ancient Greek, but of the teaching of both languages as so related, and as, in fact, one and almost the same.

In the letter which requests the full text of Professor Blackie's lecture, with permission to translate it for the columns of the 'Neologos,' Mr Gennadius expresses his long-continued admira-

tion for the learning, liberality, and enthusiasm with which the lecturer had for many years advocated the ideas and traditions of Greek scholars concerning their language.

I will consider it a great honour [he proceeds] to render into Greek anything emanating from so high an authority, from one who is respected and loved by all Greeks of any learning.

The editors, on whose behalf he wrote, desired to make the lecture widely known in Greece, and for this purpose proposed to include it in an annual volume issued by them at the beginning of the year, as well as to print it in the 'Neologos.'

Rhymed invitations were sent out for the Hellenic meeting, and provoked answers in kind—Greek, German, and English. Here is one from the pen of a learned Professor:—

“O weh ! O nein, muss sein die Antwort mein :  
Es kann nicht, kann nicht, kann nicht sein.”

And another runs :—

“The page of the Father of History,  
With all his quaintness and mystery,  
A song whatever its ring  
(So that I am not asked to sing),  
A supper that's sure to be good,  
With varied potations and food,  
Are attractions to me, one and all,  
So I gladly respond to your call.”

A scheme to raise a statue to John Knox interested Professor Blackie, to whom that fierce apostle was a hero, and he wrote far and wide to collect contributions. The business hung fire for some years, however, much to his disappointment; for the weft and woof of Scottish life was of varied texture and many colours, and there was no unanimous voice to do homage to the memory of the strong, crafty, unmerciful, shrewd, and victorious Reformer. Saints of such complexion are hard to recognise, and yet just such a stubborn warrior did Scotland need in that his day, and we may well be grateful for the work he did, even when we dislike the manner of its doing. Deliverance from formalism, and a noble national education, produced Robert Burns and Walter Scott, and Knox's truculent right arm effected the one and laid the foundations of the other. The characteristic heroism of the Scottish Reformer appealed to the Professor, himself a "happy warrior," and at this time full of resentment against the insidious influences which were sapping the national character and transforming its rugged idiosyncrasy into the imperturbable type prevailing in the south. Edinburgh was in its decadence. With flunkeyism and *diners à la Russe*, a sort of trivial fashionableness spread like a blight over its society. Decoration took the

place of distinction, and the remnant of men and women who belonged to freer times either fled from the contamination, or shut themselves up in library and studio to remember the past and avoid the present. There was no such course possible for the Professor, who fell to spirited denunciation of the new drivelling gentility. For the next score of years we find him the champion of the old historic Scotland—the land of the white rose and Prince Charlie; of the brown bent and the Covenanters; of “grey St Andrews” and Wishart, Hamilton, and Myln; of old St Giles’ and Jenny Geddes; the land made strong by endurance, noble by devotion, and free by resistance to the death.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## ‘SELF-CULTURE.’

1873–1874.

THE winter's leisure was spent in getting into brief emphatic expression the Professor's many thoughts upon the formation of a well-balanced manhood, which his long acquaintance with young men, and his observation of their tendency to turn from sanity and righteousness at the call of any “philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world,” had suggested. He noticed to what class of character each beguiling call appealed, and he endeavoured—by a book which might serve as a rallying cry to all open-minded readers—to summon them back to the right starting-point.

Some exception has been taken to the title of this little volume. ‘Self-Culture,’ it has been



urged, means self-worship; but the objection is pedantic, and the term conveys correctly the writer's meaning. Mind, body, and spirit go to form a human being, and each needs recognition, instruction, education, to interfuse its influence with the others into integral health and symmetry. The Professor, himself of sane mind and wholesome habits, loving life for all its joys and lessons, having learned, in reverence for God the creator and provider, and in communion with His Spirit, how momentous a gift is this of life, impressed in wise words upon the young the right attitude toward life, the right use to be made of its opportunities. "Having," he says, "by the golden gift of God the glorious lot of living, let us endeavour to live nobly."

His counsel is conveyed in brief, apt, and vivid expression. No dull reiteration saps the interest with which we read the little book. Its ninety pages contain more of pure wisdom than all the weighty tomes of modern philosophy, with their dreary and futile anxiety to make us independent of God. How welcome to the young manhood of the world this antidote to the torpor of these verbose schemes has proved, is indicated by its wide acceptance. Nine editions of the book appeared in three years, and twenty years have produced no fewer than twenty-two editions. It

has been translated into modern Greek, French, German, Italian, Danish, Swedish, and Finnish, has appeared in many American reprints, and in 1893 was bought amongst the English-speaking natives of India to the extent of 2000 copies. Many requests have come to its publisher from districts in India for permission to translate it into the local vernacular. One of these was received recently from a remote northern quarter, where the people only a few years ago were notably fierce and warlike, and averse to British rule.

Its composition occupied four months, and it was published by Messrs Edmonston & Douglas towards the end of 1873.

The early part of this year was clouded by the death of Dr Thomas Guthrie, the preacher, philanthropist, and friend, whom Professor Blackie esteemed along with Chalmers and Macleod as apostolic. The very sight of him was energising, and his voice, uplifted always for the right and against the wrong, or joyous in the interchange of friendly jest and story, strung men up to effort, or sweetened them into charity.

“I am the living to praise God,” Dr Guthrie had written in December; “for it would be a deplorable thing if I had had to go through all the sufferings of the last nine weeks and should get

no good from them." Less than three months later he had joined the ever-living to praise Him.

In "The Generous Evangelist," a poem made known at the time in 'Good Words' and elsewhere, and finally embodied in 'Songs of Religion and of Life,' the Professor recorded—

How in the rough-hewn Scotsman dwelt  
The word of God with power.

This man smells not of books. A green  
And lusty show he bears ;  
As one whose foot hath wandering been  
Where vitalising airs

Sweep the far-purpled hills. His God  
He cabins not in creeds ;  
But feels Him where the fir-trees nod,  
And where the south wind speeds

O'er blossomy fields. In waves and winds  
For Gospel texts he looks ;  
And in the hearts of men he finds  
What no man found in books.

A continued tussle with the Sanscrit grammar varied the work of non-academical hours, and its effects are manifest in its wider treatment of all subjects connected with the growth of language. His own annotated copy of the second edition of 'Self-Culture' has constant marginal references to the ancient Sanscrit literature and philosophy of education and con-

duct, and several of the papers published a year later in the 'Horæ Hellenicæ' bear evidence of this adventure towards the sources of European speech. It was by no means an exploration, and his object was not research. It was rather to glean from the labours of pioneers as much of their acquisitions as his mind, trained in language, could assimilate without difficulty.

He was busy inculcating his own large views of natural methods in acquiring Greek, and a note from Robert Browning in January, conveying the poet's thanks for hospitality shown to a friend, contains a sympathetic sentence:—

I altogether believe in your theory of the necessity of speaking out what ought properly to live in speech—as it exclusively must at first have done.

A lecture on the whole subject of Education belongs to March 7. It was delivered at Broughty Ferry, and offered eleven propositions as a scheme of reform, "whose truth," said the 'Pall Mall Gazette,' "is only equalled by their profanity,"—which meant boldness in the face of pedantry hallowed by the dry-rot of ages, or jubilant over-cram, its mushroom product.

A short visit to Professor Campbell Shairp broke the journey home. "Two such splendid days, with a grand expanse of sea to look out

on from these sea-topping terraces, and such nice people within, so full of love and intelligence and grace, both Scotch saving grace and Greek decorating grace!" He returned to Edinburgh to revise his paper on the "Pre-Socratic Philosophy" for 'Fraser's Magazine,' and to wind up all his business at the University, where another blast of the trumpet on Educational Reform closed the session.

His nephew, Alexander Blackie, for many years like a son to him and to Mrs Blackie, had reached the point of choosing a career, and had decided on entering one of the larger mercantile houses in Leith, London, or Liverpool, as fortune might decide. To fit him for acceptance, it was necessary to give him an opportunity of acquiring more German than grammars and exercises bestow. It was therefore planned to spend the summer months in Germany, and mainly at Göttingen.

The party, recruited by Miss Augusta Wyld, took steamer from Leith to Hamburg, and were established in pleasant quarters at Göttingen by the beginning of May. The Professor cast the slough of all customary duties and causes, and flung himself heartily into the University life, attending Dr Pauli's lectures on History, and Professor von Seebach's summer course on Geology. It was an old study revived, and one

which made his walking tours a constant delighted perusal of nature's cipher. He sat on the benches with the class, as true a Bursch as any; and shouldered his knapsack, hammer in pocket, for excursions to the Harz, which Seebach organised to bring his students face to face with facts. As interesting to him were Dr Pauli's historical tours to Hildesheim, Brunswick, and Wolfenbüttel, and his observations were duly despatched to the 'Scotsman,' in whose columns they appeared.

The open-air life of Göttingen suited them all, until in July the heat became unbearable, and the ladies suffered from its effects. Not so the Professor for once, as he selected that month for a three weeks' peregrination in Westphalia and Lorraine. Paderborn with its perpetual miracle of a river sprung full-grown, Soest, Bonn, Andernach with its volcanic neighbourhood, Metz with its battle-fields near at hand—where the dead lay buried amongst waving corn—the Eifel, with more volcanic associations, Münster, Bielefeld,—all occupied his time and observation. Too long journeys, however, and fasts too exhausting, brought on an illness between Bielefeld and Hanover, and he had to stop to be doctored on the way. He always objected to carrying food while on his travels, preferring to trust to casual inns and

station beer and sausage, and when these failed he was surprised and a little indignant to find himself tired out at the end of a twelve hours' fast. It was humiliating to discover that his vitality depended on due supplies of food and drink, which in their ordinary course he did not at all despise, but accepted as part of an inflexible social and domestic system, and as provocative of charity and good-fellowship. A short rest at Göttingen restored him, and all four prepared for a final tour before returning to Scotland. This embraced Berlin, the Baltic coast, the island of Rügen, and Copenhagen. By the end of August they were back in Edinburgh, and on their way to Altnacraig.

Gaelic, Erse, and Sanscrit mingled their vexed currents in a maelstrom of autumn study, relieved by the proofs of 'Self-Culture,' and by a digression to Bismark as a worthy topic for provincial lecture. As the year advanced, the success of his little book brightened its close. Letters from all sorts and conditions of men greeted its author.

It is all gold [wrote Sir Theodore Martin], and I would like to see it in the hand of every young man in the three kingdoms. The only point in which I differ from you is your estimate of Thackeray.

I like much its sound practical wisdom and its deep reverence [wrote Dr MacGregor].

Send me five copies [commissioned Bishop Wordsworth

in a letter to Mr Douglas], one for myself, like Solon not yet too old to learn from wiser men, and one for each of my four sons.

The Professor spent the New Year of 1874 in Liverpool, where his nephew had been received into the large and influential business of Messrs Balfour & Williamson. On his return a new "cause" was presented to him, and after some natural hesitation he undertook its probationary championship. For some years he had agreed with other scholars in Scotland that gradual extinction threatened the Gaelic language, and that its disappearance would mean a serious loss to all philology, and to the whole body of literary and artistic thought and suggestion.

An attempt had already been made by leading Free Churchmen, amongst whom should be mentioned Dr M'Lauchlan and Mr Alexander Nicolson, to ensure the scholarship of the country against this inevitable calamity. But the agent who had been employed for a year to rouse attention to the matter was not sufficiently notable to succeed, and an appeal for co-operation was forwarded to Professor Blackie. The idea was to found a Celtic Chair in the University of Edinburgh, whose occupant should make the whole group of Celtic dialects the subject of academic lectures, with particular care for Gaelic.



Professor Blackie had already studied Gaelic to good purpose both conversationally and through its literature, and was at one with this wise foresight and scholarly purpose. But he had not sufficient confidence in his own capacity for business to be willing at once to undertake the collection of a fund sufficiently large for endowment. At least £12,000 would be required, and the money already collected was a very trifling instalment of this sum.

Urged by his friends of the Free Church on the ground of his known enthusiasm for Gaelic, of his position, of the welcome given to his appearance on all platforms and in every circle, Professor Blackie came at last to realise that he was probably the only man likely to succeed in this enterprise, and he consented to be the mouthpiece of its promoters, on the conditions of tentative success and of perfect independence in the performance of his mission. He decided, as a first step, to run up to London in March, and to sound the weightier merchants, peers, and proprietors of Scottish origin concentrated there. Another motive for this hasty visit to London was the publication of '*Horæ Hellenicæ*,' which Messrs Macmillan accepted for the spring season. This book was a collection of essays on various points of Greek research which he considered to have

received inadequate treatment at the hands of the more speculative modern scholars. Some of them had already done service in the form of lectures, others had appeared in learned periodicals. Two of them advocated the views of modern Greek and of classical accent which were now associated with his name; one treated of the use of hexameters in English verse; others concerned modern theories on Greek mythology and on the origin of language; and the rest engaged controversially against Mr Grote's defence of the Sophists and his heterodox handling of the Spartan constitution. The volume was dedicated to Mr Gladstone, who accepted the compliment with pleasure, although on many points he dissented from the Professor's conclusions.

A visit to the city resulted in several promises of £100 each to the fund for a Celtic Chair, and the success of this preliminary canter decided him to run the race for a year. His business done, he returned to Edinburgh and to the work of the closing session. His study in Erse determined him to see Ireland in the summer, and he left Hill Street at the end of April 1874 with purpose and preparation complete. But three weeks had first to be given to his friend Mr Archer, who wished to paint his portrait, and he halted in London in the artist's hospitable home. Two hours of

every morning were devoted to the "counterfeit," which took shape in an excellent picture of the Professor, swathed in the wonted plaid, and standing amid scenery suggestive of some nook in a Highland glen. The attitude was chosen as suited to "bring out the character of a man who thinks best on his legs." He found the process purgatorial, and avenged himself by a perfect whirl of afternoon and evening activity. Meetings of the Education Commission alternated with gaieties. "Jowett and Sewell were there, with their smooth English faces and cold English reticence."

The most interesting episodes were the customary visit to Dr Manning, and an encounter with Mr Bradlaugh—men at the opposite poles of opinion, whose friendly relations with the Professor testify more than words to his large-hearted tolerance, and to that swift recognition of the divine in man which was never troubled by shallow censure or ignorant scare.

This morning, after I stood for the counterfeit of my bony hand and significant knuckles, I swung down to Westminster, where Archbishop Manning now has his palace, a house as he modestly calls it, on the Vauxhall Bridge Road. He was extremely agreeable and full of telling anecdotes; with him only two theological students and the editor of the 'Tablet,' yclept Rankin, a very intelligent man: so that betwixt us, round a well-spread luncheon table, a

brisk fire was kept up. The Archbishop is to give me a letter of introduction to the Bishop of Tuam, who is a famous Celt, and has made an Irish translation of the 'Iliad.' I want to get into the midst of the regular hot and bright Irish, and to avoid all Saxon solicitations.

He met Charles Bradlaugh at Mrs Gregory's.

No ghosts ! [he records], but some dozen of strange, stray characters, and among others Bradlaugh, whom she [Mrs Gregory] conceits herself to be able to convert—catching a bull with a cobweb ! A bull verily—a big Ajax, tall and broad. Having a fancy for looking closely at nature, I determined to go and hear him preach in his atheistic church on Sunday evening at the East End. It was a notable exhibition. A terrible tearing assault against the Book of Exodus, and its anthropomorphic representations of the unseen God ; eloquence powerful and fervid of the first order. Really a remarkable man, and from his point of view triumphant over those who hold by the *infallibility of the record*, instead of the *Divinity of the dispensation*. He made incidentally a public profession of atheism, which caused me to write him a long letter. I imagine that in the Socratic way I may be able to do him some good. He is a manly, honest fellow, and quite worthy of gentlemanly treatment, which I am afraid he seldom receives.

The letter was courteously answered by Mr Bradlaugh. "I would like to convince you that my atheism is neither shallow nor flippant. Spinoza, whom you name, has been in much my revered teacher." The "Socratic way" scarcely justified its antique reputation ; but had men earlier struck hands with Charles

Bradlaugh and bade him welcome in the name and charity and insight of God, as this sweet-hearted Christian did at their first encounter, can we doubt the result? Here is the record for May 4 and 5 :—

I lunched with Browning—charming, fine, manly, frank fellow, full of sense and eloquence, and overflowing with Greek. In the evening I dined with Murray, Albemarle Street, in a room hung round with portraits of Byron, Lockhart, Southey, and all the famous Tories of the last generation. To-day I breakfasted with Froude, who is just popping off for a summer retreat in Wales. He gave me some hints about Ireland, and was very bland and wise. Then I came home and spelt my Irish Bible for an hour and a half, and thereafter started off to lunch with Donald Fraser in that region of stately dreariness and cold formality called Bayswater. But mine host was all warmth and cordiality, and we were extremely jolly, he, I, and the Rev. Robert Taylor.

The month wore into the middle with dinners and lunches here and there, and with a raid amongst the publishers to find one willing to bring out a philosophical work by Dr Robert Wyld, and another to launch a little volume by Miss Christina Blackie on the 'Etymology of Place-names.' The good genius in the latter case was Mr Isbister, although Mr Murray undertook the second edition, and the Professor wrote a preface to the educational part of the book. A letter to his sister from Stepney contains news

of his success on her behalf, and gossip about his gaddings to and fro. "I take to the dissipation quite easily. It is mere trifling when compared with the digging at Sanscrit roots in dark Hill Street!"

At a luncheon with Lady Burdett Coutts he met the Duke of Sutherland, who broached the subject of crofts and crofters, and invited him to come to Dumrobin in October. He accepted the invitation, but afterwards wrote to the Duke to explain that he was an ardent upholder of the crofters, and had written, spoken, sung much and at many times to that effect. The invitation was repeated, and the visit eventually paid. On May 13 he lunched at Niddry Lodge with Campbell of Islay,—

the finest fellow that I have seen here, full of a free, frank, broad, vigorous, and hilarious manhood. He is great in Celtic and in geology; and can use a painter's brush to purpose besides. In the evening I swung down to Cheyne Row and had an hour's talk with stout old Carlyle, who is flailing about him in the same one-sided magnificently unreasonable way that you know. Of course I protested against that sort of thing *in toto*; and ended by putting myself under the wing of Aristotle, who, if not a greater genius, is certainly a much wiser man, than Carlyle.

An "amazing event," as he describes it, detained him in town. This was an appointment

with the American publisher of his 'Four Phases of Morals' and 'Self-Culture,' who insisted on putting £50 in the Professor's pocket. Later on the same day he met Mr Gladstone,—

and we had much interesting talk about Celtic and Saxon elements in British blood, about the recent excavations at Troy, and other subjects. I presented to him an elegantly bound copy of my new book [*Hore Hellenicæ*], which he received graciously, and said that I had paid him a great compliment. To which of course I replied that he had furnished my front leaf with a great ornament.

Mr Archer let him go at last, on condition of his bond to return at Christmas for further sittings, and he sped away to Gloucester to pay Mr Dobell a passing visit. He found his friend in fragile health, but without portent of the end, so near.

From Nailsworth he went to Wales to renew some friendships there, in hasty fashion, with loins girt and staff in hand. On May 23 he started for the Green Isle.

It is a sad thing to part from so much beauty, brightness, and goodness, but a glimpse of excellence is a joy for ever in memory. Dolabella is as full of grace and simplicity and gentleness and bright-eyed intelligence as ever.

At Dublin his host was an old acquaintance called Dr Dobbin, who lived in the suburbs about

a mile from Donnybrook. He took a little cottage for the Professor, who wished to spend some peaceful and studious hours every day ; but this was made impossible by the rush of hospitality. He gave up his struggles with Erse and his hopes of solitary explorations in and round about the city, and let himself go on the current of Irish kindness, not without a little grumbling at its force. He had come to Ireland, already weary of being lionised, to inquire and to study. But he enjoyed his dinners with the Provost of the University, with Professor Dowden, and with Professor Mahaffy. Besides these academical hosts, the acquaintance to which he most cordially responded was the well-known specialist, Sir William Wilde.

An enthusiastic antiquary, with his head full of old castles, old chapels, old sepulchres, and every sort of curious lumber consecrated with millemarian dust. He is a tall, blithe, frank, and very intelligent fellow. Yesterday I called on his lady, who is a poetess, and very tall. She has an admiration for my 'Æschylus,' and of course for myself!

Dinners with the Wildes and "various notable Dublin intellectualities" followed, and he found it hard work to snatch moments from the flying hours in which to read Froude's and other Irish histories.



Dr Stokes, President of the Royal Irish Academy, piloted him through the Museum, and introduced him to his daughter, who was just then collaborating with Lord Dunraven at a work on the oldest architecture of Ireland. By this time he had changed his quarters from the suburban cottage to Mr Armstrong's house at Rathmines. Mr Erskine Nicol had furnished him with a heartily honoured introduction to his host. Together they

drove off to Drogheda, and, under the experienced captainship of Sir William Wilde, entered the subterranean chambers of famous, old, pre-Celtic kings, perhaps the oldest buildings in Europe, possibly older than the Pyramids, of which they are rude types. Sir William, a restless, keen-eyed old gentleman, who has all the district of the Boyne written on the volumes of his brain, snuffed and poked about.

The battle-field, the round tower, the Irish crosses, were all inspected.

Much as he enjoyed Dublin, he was glad to get quit of the "tussle of society," and to bid it farewell at a dinner with the Club of the Royal Irish Academy. His host escaped with him, and by June 9 they had put a hundred miles between them and the convivial capital, halting first at Cashel of the Kings.

I now feel the dear delight of no goad in this metropolis of old abbeys, castles, and round towers, and am soothed

by a strange and grateful feeling of quiet liberty after five weeks' driving and junketing and fretting about, and serving all things but my own sweet will.

From Cashel to Cork, from Cork to Queens-town, thence to the groves of Blarney, where he "kissed the Blarney stone with the end of a Platonic stick," were but stages on the way to Glengarriff, Bantry Bay. Mr Armstrong returned to Dublin, and he settled down for some days to revel in the "Green Paradise," and to read the histories of Ireland which he had brought. They led him to make several excursions in the neighbourhood to identify the scenes of many a tragedy.

Everywhere in this country the memorials meet us of blood and bungling, of stupidity and swindling. One needs only to travel here to forgive the Irish all their follies.

He reached Kenmare on June 17, and stayed some days with Mr and Mrs Trench at Dereen, a visit which he thoroughly enjoyed in spite of the fact that the main conveyance was by yawl on the water, and that he held with the immortal to whom "a boat was a moving prison with a chance of being drowned." Here is a sea-adventure :—

We keep a yawl, and so long as the breeze keeps steady, ploughing the briny way is sufficiently pleasant; but then the breeze is like the Irish character, extremely impulsive

and fitful, and it does not always blow in the right direction: this of course causes us to go by the longest possible road, technically called "tacking"; then the breeze, which is our sole dependence, without giving any warning, or assigning any substantial reason, will suddenly die away, and so we lie becalmed; and the night comes on, and though the stars twinkle blissfully in the blue sky, and the moon glances with poetical light over the lofty swelling waters, and the dip of the oar strikes fire from the phosphorescent billow, yet one does not feel exactly either easy in body or poetically moved in spirit. So we get out of our large craft and seek the shore in a small punt, which at every bound brings the greedy waters snapping at our upper vestments, not to mention porpoises and other sea-monsters gambolling about all round us, blowing and snorting fearfully with their noses (if they have any), and threatening at every turn to upset our little prison with a flap of the tail, and set us at large liberty for ever in the deep Neptunian mansions. This is a literal picture of a voyage which we made last night home from a visit to one of the Saxon gentlemen who rent Celtic castles on the north side of the bay.

On June 22d he

saw Killarney lakes in the easiest and most effective way without losing a moment's time. The road from Kenmare comes close down upon the top of the lakes; so Mr Trench telegraphed in the morning that a boat should be sent up from the Lake Hotel to take me from the mail-car, and row me down through the whole range of the woody meanderings of those delightful waters.

He reached Limerick next day on the eve of St John, where he made

a march of discovery through the most ragged part of the town, and you may imagine the sensation I created appearing in my Edinburgh costume. Great crowds of boys are gathered about in corners lighting bonfires, to which I was invited by the bolder sort to contribute, but the greater part evidently did not consider me an approachable being. All stared,—some winked and grinned,—others burst out into open laughter,—and some fled in fear as from a bogle!

The appearance of his trim figure—in black surtout and plaid, with broad-brimmed hat and twirling stick, and feathery white hair blown about and over his collar, stepping, pausing, gazing, perchance singing, certainly uttering aloud his momentary emotions—must have filled the slums of Limerick on St John's Eve with awe and admiration.

A slow journey brought him to Tuam, where disappointment awaited him in the Archbishop's absence: but Father Bourke received him with all cordiality and reasoned discourse tempered by champagne. The next stage was Galway, on the shelves of whose College he found 'Horæ Hellenicæ' newly planted. "The boys here have a custom of answering to everything 'All right!' but one finds generally that it is all wrong."

He left Galway, after a day's rest, for the Connemara hills, and settled down at Kylemore, where he enjoyed a spell of climbing and exult-

ing in the grandeur and beauty of the Irish highlands.

The fogs were creeping about among the highest peaks, but I saw the wonderful variety of gleam and gloom that, as in Wester Ross, characterises this land of strangely intersected fell and flood.

Sunday occurred during his "soul's rest" at Kylemore.

I had a kindly whim to deliver to the excellent people a sermon. So they called some twenty or thirty from the neighbourhood together in the dining-room of Kylemore House. I led off with a psalm and a short prayer, and then discoursed on Hebrews xi., the drift of my discourse being to show that faith is an act of the practical reason in matters necessarily influencing the will, and leading to a persistent course of conduct in harmony with the belief in God and the divine order of the universe,—the identity of faith and work, or the necessary fatherhood of the one by the other, becoming thus evident.

His tour was at an end. It had been favoured by cloudless weather. Hurried although it was, and deflected from its purpose by overmastering hospitality, he had seen much and learnt much, and he came back sad at heart for Ireland.

Belfast and Edinburgh were but stages for Altnacraig, which he reached on July 4. His voyage in the Iona was depressing, and he was forced to seek shelter from the rain, and to find in Swinburne's 'Bothwell' some compensation for

lack of movement. He was no critic of form and verse, and always insisted that a story should interest him, which the misfortunes of Queen Mary failed to do. Perhaps his predilection for John Knox extended to that "sair sanct's" detestation of contemporary crowned women.

It seems to me [he wrote to his aunt] that a woman cannot be a politician, or live amongst politicians, without becoming either bad or miserable.

His friend Sydney Dobell breathed his last "in blessed quietness" on the 22d of August 1874, and he was at once entreated to hold himself in readiness to pay the last honours to the form which had held that urbane and delicate spirit. He went to the funeral, which took place on September 1 at Painswick, and afterwards wrote a short account of the poet,—“a man of most pure, generous, and altogether noble character.”

The summer of 1874 was singularly fine, and Mr Hutcheson organised a series of all-day excursions to and from Loch Scavaig and Skye. He invited the party at Altnacraig and a contingent of friends, visitors to Oban, to make the first trip with himself. At six in the morning the steamer left Oban pier, and at ten in the evening it returned. It was a day to be well remembered: a sea like glass; a shoal of mackerel pursued into a shallow bay and leaping like frothed silver on

the waters ; tumbling porpoises ; the rock-bound coast of Skye, the fresh waves of Loch Scavaig, where a wind seems ever in ambush ; and the solemn blackness of Loch Coruisk. Dr Appleton, Mr M'Lennan, Mr T. T. Stoddart, and Mr and Mrs Ross of Stepney were of the party, whose vagrant centre and stimulus was the Professor.

Not long after, Mrs Blackie invited the same party to a picnic at the old stronghold of the Lords of Lorne in Kerrera, Castle Gylan,—perched on the southern cliff, where currents divide and seas leap and roar when the wind sweeps the Atlantic. The talk was of Highland chiefs and their followers, of the loyal adhesion of older times and its betrayal in days when “a four-footed people” is rated worthier than a clan of faithful hearts. They went back by boat along the Sound to high tea at Altnacraig, where songs wound up the day.

When the summer visitors left, the Professor went to Inveraray Castle, where the Princess Louise was staying with the Duke and Duchess of Argyll.

At 7.30 the most important event of the day took place. The Duke marched in first with the Princess, who had a beautiful gold chaplet on her head. Lord Halifax took in the Duchess ; and to me was assigned Miss Wood, the daughter of his lordship, beautiful, bland, but not venturing out her horns before the majesty of a Professor of Greek.

The rest of the party were Lord Percy and his spouse, Lord Colin, the Marquis, Lady Halifax, and more than half-a-dozen of young Argyll chicks with the most beautiful locks of flowing gold. After dinner we marched into the drawing-room, where I had to read my Gaelic translations to the Princess, which went off with manifest approbation. Nothing of special importance occurred. Lord Halifax seemed amused at the strong feeling which I expressed with regard to Bob Lowe and his wretched educational mechanics. The piper played, marching to and fro on the lawn, half an hour before dinner, and the same shrill swell of musical drones proclaimed itself at 8 A.M. this morning as a sort of cock-crow.

Next day he stayed at the Castle, reading up the Ossianic controversy while the rest of the party went picnicking to Loch Awe in a drizzling mist. At night he sang "Blücher" in the drawing-room.

The Princess is very agreeable, and I have long talks with her. She is an artistic creature, and not given to deal in discursive talk, but extremely frank and intelligent.

There is a tradition that he clapped her on the back and called her "a bonnie lassie," but it lacks written confirmation. Certain it is that he sent her an offering of his book 'On Beauty' when he went home.

After a fortnight at Altnacraig the trio left to make a tour in the north as far as Loch Shin before returning to Edinburgh. Included in this



were his visit to Dunrobin and a lecture on behalf of the Celtic Chair, delivered at Inverness.

The Duke of Sutherland [he wrote from Dunrobin] is a remarkable character, tall and big, but with a careless broad swing about him; not the least like a lordly English aristocrat. He is quite natural, easy, and affable in his manners, with a sort of indifference, however, that kills all airs and allays all apprehensions. He is not at all brilliant in conversation, but has a great amount of good sense and good humour, and has seen and tried a great number of things in a practical way. He is at present engrossed with gigantic agricultural improvements, with working a coal-mine, and with manufacturing bricks! He takes me all over his property, and lets me see what is being done, and keeps an eye on all that is going on. I forgot to say that he is breeding salmon also on a grand scale, nursing the young fry as carefully as we do delicate children, and having a nursery for them that holds not less than a million in their earliest and smallest stage.

While at Inveraray, he had spoken to the Duke and Duchess of Argyll about the Celtic Chair, and had received from them hearty encouragement in his effort "to stir Highland blood." In the north he continued to proclaim the cause, and held at Inverness the first public meeting on its behalf. Its success, and that of another at Glasgow towards the close of the year, decided him to undertake the work systematically, and he accepted the arduous post of collector pressed upon him by his Free Church friends.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE CELTIC CHAIR.

1875-1876.

THE record of this movement from start to finish forms the main source for Professor Blackie's biography during the ensuing four years.

The matter had been relegated to the University Council as soon as he seriously undertook its promotion. A committee was formed, which included representatives of the Edinburgh University, of the Highlands, of Celtic scholarship, and of the Free Church. Sir Alexander Grant, Professor Masson, Cluny Macpherson, Mr Alexander Nicolson, Lord Neaves, and Professor Macgregor were its members. Professor Blackie was member and convener, as well as executor of its behests. Papers indicating the circumstances which made the preservation of Celtic dialects urgent, and

fitted with blank pages for subscription-lists, were prepared and forwarded to all parts of the kingdom, as well as to all provinces and colonies of the empire where Highlanders were resident. These were accompanied by the Professor's personal appeal,—on behalf of the maintenance of Gaelic in the Highlands for the people; of the Celtic dialects in the University for the needs of philological study.

The schools consequent upon the new educational policy were—in all parts of the Highlands—sapping the very foundations of their language. Manned by English-speaking teachers, they condemned the children who did not understand English to sit side by side with those who did, to read the same lessons, and to profit by them as best they could. To little girls and boys who painfully learned to utter sounds which conveyed no meaning to them, the hours at school were an unredeemed penance. The teacher had no means of relieving their futility, for a knowledge of Gaelic was not a necessary qualification for his post. At the expense of these early victims, however, the conviction was well stamped into the minds of the Highlanders that education, employment, success depended upon their losing the mother-tongue and adopting that of the Sassenach law-maker.

We hear much, and with some indignation, of interference with the languages of Poland, Finland, and such outlying lands of imperial rule ; but the process went on in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland with a slow, sure, and impalpable tyranny. To arrest its mischievous pressure, and to save Gaelic from extinction, was as much the aim of the “Apostle of the Celts” as was the mere academic rescue of its language and literature. He addressed himself to a more concentrated study of these than hitherto,—communicated with every available scholar whose proficiency was by right of birth as well as by right of inclination,—sought out the local poets and archæologists, with whom remained the treasure of traditional lore,—and translated himself passages from the Ossianic poems, and lyrical, heroic, or elegiac songs from the Highland “makers” of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Mr Campbell of Islay was one of his helpers ; and Alexander Nicolson, the loyalest Celt, the truest friend, the sweetest singer of his clan, gave him unwearied assistance in disentangling the historical from the mythical in the mass over which he pored.

Along with his studies went his public advocacy, and together they took the concrete form of public lectures. In Scotland the lecture was on Gaelic and its literature, in England it

was on the English language with its Celtic elements. They were delivered wherever the platform of an institute, club, or society was opened to him. He charged a fee of from five to ten guineas, according to the finances of the association, and this money went to swell the fund for the Celtic chair. Wherever this duty led him he awoke enthusiastic response, and during the first half of 1875 subscriptions poured into the fund, and their acknowledgment, banking, and booking occupied a considerable portion of his time. By the month of May £4000 stood to the credit of his cause. The Dukes of Argyll and Sutherland, the Mackay clan, the Celtic Society of Glasgow, Mr Duncan M'Neill, The Chisholm, the Marquis of Bute, Mr Fraser Mackintosh of Drummond, Mr Lachlan Macdonald of Skeabost, Mr Barbour, Mr Duncan Smith, Mr Mackinnon, Mr Hall, the Royal Celtic Society of Edinburgh, and Mr C. Morrison contributed £100 each to this sum; and professors, Highland proprietors, doctors, lawyers, and others made up its complement. It is scarcely delicate, however, to give a detailed list of those who, by prompt giving, made their gifts of double worth, and gave a foretaste of the supplies whose stream his advocacy released. From all quarters came backing for his cause,—from Travancore in India; from Darjeeling and Ceylon; from Australia, New

Zealand, Canada, and Newfoundland; from Rio de Janeiro, Chicago, San Francisco, and Illinois; from Skye, the Lews, Barra, and the sterile islets of the west; from theatres and banks and post-offices and police-stations; from clubs and regiments and Highland gatherings; from the richest and the poorest; from her Majesty the Queen, and from Highlanders who could offer only their scanty pence sent in the form of postage-stamps. And with every contribution, great and small, came the same generous enthusiasm, the same ardent gratitude, the same rich meed of admiring encouragement.

It was to the Duke and Duchess of Argyll that Professor Blackie owed her Majesty's cordial interest in his undertaking—an interest expressed in a donation of £200 towards the fund, as well as in her gracious command to be informed from time to time of his success.

The year 1875 began with public meetings,—that at Inverness being perhaps the most notable, although the Professor was not himself present. Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Mr Davidson of Tulloch, Bishop Eden, Mr Jolly, and Dr Carruthers roused the neighbourhood with their speeches. By the end of the University session so great progress had been made with the fund that the Council formed a new and larger committee, to which Dr

M'Lauchlan, the translator of the Dean of Lismore's collection of Gaelic verse, was added. Dr Clerk of Kilmallie, the most recent of the translators of Ossian, was also requested to join its ranks, and the Committee addressed itself to the work of widening the circle of enthusiasm already reached.

The Professor himself left Edinburgh for the south at the end of April, and after a journey whose dulness was enhanced by an exasperating effort to master Browning's 'Aristophanes' Apology,' he reached Birmingham, welcomed at the station by "a band of honest Highlanders," and stayed there a couple of days to lecture for the Chair. The next step was to London, where he made his home with the Archers. A promise weighed painfully on his mind, that of writing a notice of Mr Dobell's poems just published. Love for his friend did not blind him to their defects, and after a prolonged study, he decided to put off an uncongenial task for the present. He could not praise immoderately, and he feared to wound by a critical estimate.

Mr Archer's portrait of him was now in the Academy's Exhibition, and was much admired. The usual whirl of engagements swept him into its vortex, and he spent all May, with a short interlude, in lunching, dining, breakfasting with

friends new and old. The only time he could rescue for his Gaelic study was a morning hour in bed, but every visit paid was an opportunity for "making a victim" to the cause. In several of his letters we discover anxiety about the fox-gloves at Altnacraig, and directions for new sowing and transplanting into sheltered nooks of this favourite flower.

A charming letter from Mr Isaac Taylor brought him a contribution on May 19 :—

You have heard [wrote the genial vicar] the story of the widow's mite. I am, as you correctly observe, "a poor devil," and you will see by the enclosed papers that my last year's stipend amounted to the sum of £1, 14s. 1d. Well, to show you the interest I take in your Celtic Chair, I will, like the widow, give it ALL!!!—the only condition being that you must come and fetch it, according to your promise. What are the paltry hundreds and fifties of your great Highland lairds after such munificence? I think I ought to be put in a tract as an example to others.

He rushed north to Edinburgh on May 27 to speak at both Presbyterian Assemblies; and having acquitted himself manfully to thunders of applause, he dined with the Lord High Commissioner on the 29th, and took the night train back to London. Next day he

lunched with Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, whose wife is sister of that noble Celt, John Campbell of Islay; and then I



called on Murray the publisher, who gave me a present of Schliemann's book on Troy, and on Macmillan (two future victims of the Celtic Chair), on the Marquis of Huntly, and on Dr Dyce Duckworth, a pledged victim.

On June 2 came the Duke of Argyll's letter with the welcome news of the Queen's subscription, "accompanied by a warm expression of approval on her Majesty's part"; and on June 6 a great public luncheon was given at Willis's Rooms to further the fund, the Marquis of Huntly presiding.

Next day he was in Oxford, and wrote to Mrs Blackie:—

Archer and I arrived here last night. After breakfast to-day an hour was spent over the last notes of my imminent lecture, and then I marched forth to the new Museum of Natural History. There I waited till the Marquis of Lorne and dear Dr Acland came in, and at twelve exactly we entered the lecture-room, which was quite full of dons and ladies, the grave and the beautiful gracefully blended. I made a proper apology for having invited myself to lecture to such a distinguished audience, and commenced my philologic fire without further ceremony. The audience was most sympathetic and attentive; and I concluded after an hour's talking by reciting two of my own poetical translations from the Gaelic poets, which met with responsive rounds of pedestrian applause, even from the tall, majestic, and grave Dean of Christ Church, who was sitting exactly before me. When I sat down the Marquis stood up to pronounce the triumphant eulogy of the Pro.! After lecture I went with

Dr Acland to lunch with the members of the Royal Family who are living in his house. I sat between the Duke of Connaught and Prince Leopold, both pleasant and agreeable young men. From the open window of the lunching-room we walked into a garden of such luxuriant greenery as England alone can show, in the midst of which the Princess and Mr Acland and the Argyll ladies were sitting at tea under a bower through which the sun shot the most delicate radiance. I sat beside the Princess Louise, whom I love much: she is so frank and unaffected, and so tastefully but plainly adorned. While discussing the tea some talk arose about the pronunciation of Latin, and I sung one of the Odes of Horace to a well-known Scotch tune. We then adjourned to the gardens of Worcester College, where there was a grand exhibition of flowers; and now I am in the cool shade of the Rugby club-room, writing to my dearie. To-night we go to an evening party at the Aclands', where we shall rub shoulders with Royalty again, and feel less inclined than ever to pull down the Established Church or to dethrone the Queen! To-morrow is Commemoration. I shall see the shows here, and return to London with the afternoon train. On Thursday I breakfast with Gladstone, and take the night train to Edinburgh.

At Dr Acland's party,

who came in but Ruskin, and we embraced publicly! The man is overflowing with goodness, but fond of asserting extreme and one-sided opinions. I love him. Oxford has widened her jacket considerably since I first knew it; has been forced, indeed, like Noah's ark, to admit all sorts of beasts, clean and unclean, being, as the 'Daily News' has it, ethereal enough to admit Mr Ruskin, and Scotch enough to tolerate Professor Blackie!

He was back at Altnacraig by the middle of June, struggling with a pile of letters which had accumulated during the few days of his detention in Edinburgh. Of these the most interesting, unconnected with the Celtic Chair, was one from his friend Mr William Jolly, H.M. Inspector of Schools for the Highlands, who had made his home in the neighbourhood of Inverness. This contained an invitation to join a tour of inspection in the Outer Hebrides—the Uists and Barra—a month later.

You would see these remarkable Atlantic lands [wrote Mr Jolly] beneath the great ocean breezes, unadulterated from the American shores and the Gulf Stream; visit the scattered schools, in which you can give full play to your Gaelic; be treated with the ancient hospitalities of the brave Clan Ranald; be tossed on the billows of the open sea in the light strong boats of the good fishermen there; in short, have pleasant, happy, strange, instructive, educational, and unique experiences.

The invitation was promptly accepted, and the intervening weeks were used to put into literary form the results of the Professor's researches into the history and literature of the Highlands. He had wished Mr Campbell of Islay to be a candidate for the Celtic Chair in due season, but the suggestion did "not smile" upon his friend, who wrote on June 19:—

I would not sit in that chair for £100,000 a-year. There was a man in a tale I wot of who was found by the hero in a field breaking big stones by sitting on them. When the princess was fairly won, a traitor king prepared a chair with a steel spike in it for the hero, who had engaged the stone-crusher as henchman. The henchman sat in the chair, and the hero sat therein afterwards. I have not got a *Tonchruidh* to prepare the seat for me, and I would not sit on spikes to be pelted with hard epithets by all the Gaelic scholars in the kingdom. When asked for my opinion, I will vote for the man best fitted to sit on spikes and be pelted with jaw-breakers.

On July 7 he took steamer for Inverness, and stayed with Mr Jolly for a few days. Here is the programme of their activities :—

To-morrow some driving about in the forenoon, and in the evening speechification; on Friday, the great day of the wool-market, public dinner, speechification, and, as I hope, pocket-picking; on Saturday, Glen-Urquhart and its beauties and hospitalities; on Sunday, perhaps Dingwall; on Monday, Portree; and in Skye generally till next Saturday.

Here I am [he wrote on July 10], halfway between Inverness and Glen-Urquhart, where we shall arrive before nine and take breakfast with Major Grant, a ruddy-faced soldier, full of vigour and heartiness, and a good Celt—as all the best-hearted and most manly men in the Highlands are those who have the kindest side to the traditions, character, and language of their fathers. The meeting of the Ossianic Society on Thursday night was a bumper affair. Mr Fraser-Mackintosh was in the chair, giving an element of dignity to the meeting. At 4 P.M.

yesterday we took dinner with the big sheep-lairds and a whole host of people of a very different complexion from the Pro.; but contrast is stimulating and variety agreeable. Fraser-Mackintosh was again in the chair; next to him Lochiel, and next the Pro. and Mr Jolly. It was a very laudable sort of dinner, being despatched—including speeches—in two hours. Lochiel spoke excellently, and the Pro. as usual was “characteristic”!

On Monday they made their way by Strome Ferry and Broadford to the manse of Blaven, a first hospitable stage in Skye. The weather changed to drenching rain, and their progress by boat, by dog-cart, and on foot was made

“resigned to the fate of ducks. Nothing else disagreeable has occurred, only a certain obtrusive amount of attention, an everlasting too-muchness. Half an inch of butter on the bread is delightful, but a whole inch revives the wish for a dry crust.”

This suggests fatigue. Hospitality greeted the travellers in all nooks of Skye, which they left on the 19th for North Uist, spending three days on the treeless island, in whose churchyard he found the grave of a native poet and wit mentioned by Macpherson.

We then proceeded some six or seven miles till we came to the shore of the long *faadhla* that separates North Uist from Benbecula. It is a long arm or stretch of the sea overflowing the flat land at full tide, but leaving it dry at low water and half-tide; so we had the strange experience of walking across from the one island to the other

literally on the sea-bottom, and with a vivid impression of what happened to Pharaoh, King of Egypt, when he made a similar transit across an arm of the Red Sea. It was market-day in Benbecula, and as our transit was made late in the afternoon, we had the satisfaction of seeing large cavalcades of the natives with long strings of cattle coming across the briny flat, and with the high mountains and S.E. cones of N. Uist making a picture worthy of the best moments of Faed. The men, mounted on goodly and most serviceable ponies, are big-boned and massive, and regularly Roman in their noses. The people here generally seem made of good stuff; they are strong and large rather than handsome.

From Benbecula Mr Jolly's duties led them to South Uist, whence the Professor wrote on July 28 :—

This is the place where Flora Macdonald was born, and we are just returned from visiting the ruins of her cottage, all grown over with nettles, and dock, and burdock, and rank grass. Enclosed is some grey lichen and forget-me-not from the inside of the ruins. I took off my hat and kissed the large grey stone at the door of the house. On Tuesday we ascended Mount Hecla, the highest point of S. Uist, and had a splendid view of the expatiation of desolation of which this island principally consists. On Saturday we cross to Barra.

The tour had been utilised for lectures at Portree and Drimisdale to Skye and South Uist audiences. It came to an end in Mull about the middle of August.

Many years earlier Professor Blackie had vowed to see a new part of Scotland every summer if

possible, and he had made good his purpose hitherto, contenting himself with short visits to as yet unknown localities, when his intervals from the pressure of many engagements were few and brief. This year, however, in Mr Jolly's instructive and pleasant company, he covered a larger area than usual.

On his return to Altnacraig he found a letter commanding his presence at Inveraray Castle, where the Queen was staying. Her Majesty wished to learn from his own lips the results which he had hitherto attained in advocating the Celtic Chair. His luggage had gone astray, and the summons was immediate. He was starting cheerfully, minus his dress clothes, when at the last moment his portmanteau appeared on a friendly wheelbarrow, and his confidence in the "natural course of things" was justified. He got safely through the audience, and the Queen sent her birthday-book for his signature and motto the following morning. He wrote both Greek and Gaelic texts after his name.

The autumn was given to his book on Gaelic literature, to the session work, to Celtic Chair business, and to lectures at Newcastle, Kirkcudbright, Carlisle, and Liverpool. An extract from the minutes of the General Council of the Edinburgh University gives us the date 29th October 1875 for the Council's acknowledgment of the

report of the Celtic Chair Committee, and their approval of the investment of sums already collected, with their authority for the investment of further sums on similar security, in the names of the Principal of the University, Professor Blackie, and Mr Donald Beith, W.S.,—the last-named gentleman acting as treasurer to the fund.

The habit of rhyming, which acted as a safety-valve to his emotions and just indignations, laid up a store of verses, the harvest of long journeys, of pedestrian tours, of overwhelming impressions, which demanded issue in book form every few years. In time for a New Year’s gift to his wife appeared ‘Songs of Religion and of Life,’ which included the “Generous Evangelist” already mentioned, as well as a number of poems belonging to former publications. Amongst the contributions freshly minted were some hymns, which combined a very true reverence of feeling with a rather combative expression. His ire was roused by the sacerdotalism which, while a prescribed factor in certain church systems, is too apt to creep into those Churches whose very watchword is liberty from its oppression. The Free Church of Scotland was notorious at the time for the personal pronouncement of dogma as from men having authority, and much of the matter in these verses which hurts the reader’s sense to-day was provoked by a kind of parochial Popery when



they were written. They represent a mood provoked by clerical presumption, rather than a dispassionate and reverential utterance on their supreme themes.

Some of the Songs of Life better express his joyous, grateful, deep-seated adoration, and amongst them "A Song of Summer," "Farewell to Summer," "A Song of Three Words," and "The Garden" are true and spontaneous strains. But at the time the volume comforted many hearts sore with the fitful prevalency of intolerance and ignorance, and may be held to have done service in its season. The Rev. John Pulsford wrote of it :—

Songs sung into you by heaven and earth, and the Sacred Spirit, which weareth both, will sing something into me. God bless you, and relate you, and me too, more and ever more intimately to the Fountain of all musical truth, and make us clearer voices of its all-including harmonies, for the glory of the Good One, and the quickening and refreshment of His children.

And Sir Theodore Martin, to whom a specially inscribed copy was sent, responded with words of vivid affection :—

The ties which have now for so many years bound us have never been relaxed or broken. There are few things in my life I value more than your friendship—few on which I look back with more satisfaction. What a happy thing it has been for a man immersed like me in

the exacting labours of professional life, that I made such friends as yourself, and cherished the tastes which such friendship implies !

The work of the fund went on apace. It led the Professor into fierce conflict on the Ossianic question. His advocacy of the Gaelic language, Dr Archibald Clerk's new translation of Ossian, and Dr Hately Waddell's 'Ossian and the Clyde,' had revived the whole question of Macpherson's sincerity. The Professor inclined to Dr Clerk's views, and plunged into the fray against all comers, conspicuously against Mr Campbell of Islay, a humorous and delightful antagonist. Their pens crossed and shivered all the spring and summer of 1876, Mr Campbell refusing to believe in Macpherson's Gaelic, which his opponent respected as partly ancient and 'partly modern, holding that those epical fragments which were taken down from recitation had suffered the time-change that affects all vernaculars. Mr Campbell was an acknowledged judge of Gaelic, for he had spent his best leisure amongst the West Highlanders in collecting not only their popular tales, but their heroic ballads. The latter he had published in their native language as the 'Leabhar na Fèinn,' a book full of true sympathy with the genius of the people. The combatants asserted and reasserted their positions, neither conquering

the other's conviction, but the correspondence was one of the Professor's diversions during the year 1876.

Two notes from distinguished contributors to the fund belong to this time, and should be quoted. One is from Dr John Brown, ever the "beloved physician" to those who knew him:—

This is all I can give [he wrote]; you are a happy and victorious man, clad with zeal as with a cloak.

Professor Lushington's letter runs:—

MY DEAR HOMEROPHIL,—It is a singular spectacle when the most *sonnenklar* truths escape the ken of the keenest critics. You, translator and commentator of Homer, have missed the obviously true meaning of some noted passages: it is not given to every man to know himself, and the only possible solution of your failing to discover the true reading must be that *you are* the true reading.

ΝΙΓΡΕΥΣ αὐ Κελτῶν ἡγήσατο βαρβαροφώνων  
 Νιγρεὺς Ἀγλαΐης υἱὸς Χ.ᾠ.  
 Νιγρεὺς ὅς κάλλισθ' ἄ. ὤ. ἰ. ἡ  
 ὅς καὶ χρυσὸν ἔχων πολέμονδ' ἔεν ἡ ὕτε κέρη,  
 αἰὲν ἀναιδείην ἐπειμένος, ὥς ποτ' ἐπήγχε,  
 ἦλθε δ' ἐπὶ πτωχὸς πανδήμιος Ἴρος ἀλήτης  
 Κελτικὸν ἴδρυσεν θρόνον ὑψίτερον Βαβυλώτος,  
 σείσατο δ' εἰνὶ θρόνῳ ἐλέλιξε δὲ μακρὸν Ὀλύμπον.

Rendered in Sassenach,—

“Blackie led the Celts, grim hordes of speech uncouth ;  
Blackie, son of splendour, princely, bright-eyed youth,  
Blackie, fairest warrior, came to battle laden  
With gold he grabbed from all sides, like a radiant maiden.  
The virtuous mail of impudence he donned right merrilie,  
A universal beggar, a wordy Wanderer he ;  
He reared a lofty Celtic Chair, which Babel’s Tower resembled,  
And in the chair he shook himself, and earth and heaven  
trembled.”

The writer of this biography spent a fortnight of January 1866 in the pleasant home-life of 24 Hill. Street, and well remembers the constant going and coming of the “wordy Wanderer”; the little dinner-parties, where precedence was not, nor chill, nor tedium,—at a round table, on which the dainty dishes stood and were carved; at which Dr John Brown, Dr Hanna, Professor Hodgson, and Isabella Bird vied with each other in wise wit and tender record of human needs and strivings, while laughter hailed the host’s alert interjections, and condoned his sparkling personalities. Nor can she forget Mrs Blackie’s nursing, nor the invalid’s room, to which all kindly visitors repaired, where afternoon tea was drunk, and grey professors did not disdain to visit the sick, made brave in lace and shawls to receive company.

A lecture at Newcastle on “Bismark and Compulsory Military Service” varied the procession

of lectures on Gaelic. It was given on February 4, and was fully reported in various journals. The report interested military men, and was circulated amongst them by Colonel Cunningham Robertson, who brought it to the appreciative notice of Sir Garnet Wolseley. But its fee was devoted to the Celtic Chair, and it deserves record rather because he "glorified blood and iron triumphantly in the face of a sweet Quaker hostess," and followed this feat up by a sympathetic visit to the Quakers' meeting, than for any lasting impression made by his belligerent "flourish."

Dr Walter C. Smith received a call from the Free High Church of Edinburgh early this year, and "flitted" from Glasgow accordingly. The Professor, who missed Dr Guthrie, welcomed in his friend a poet and scholar, as well as pastor. He regularly attended the afternoon service in the High Church, and part of its value to him was in the walk afterwards with Dr Smith, and the talk upon deep matters of the spiritual life at his house. This became habitual, and there can be no doubt that to his pastor he opened a storehouse of inmost thought and feeling sealed up from the general eye. Not that he acknowledged him as one set in spiritual authority over him, for he held that every believer was a priest,

and as such open, if he would, to the divine revelation; but they met in affectionate and mutual insight, to hold discourse on matters sacred to both.

The review of Sydney Dobell's poems, which he had found impossible the year before, engaged some hours of March, and he was able to imbue it sufficiently with the love and reverence which he bore to the man, to soften the honest rigour of his criticism on the poems. He was not a good judge of poetry, being prejudiced by adhesion to certain hard and fast standards.

It was in this month also that he began to lecture in Edinburgh and elsewhere on "Scottish Song," one of his favourite subjects for the last fifteen of his platform years. Across the Borders this address was always rapturously received on account of the genial gibes which it contained against his Anglified countrymen, who thought it vulgar to sing the songs of Burns, of Lady Nairne, and of the Ettrick Shepherd. In the earlier years of its deliverance he sang the illustrations himself, and no one who heard his rendering of "The Bonnie Hoose o' Airlie," or "Get Up and Bar the Door," or "Jenny Geddes," or "Kelvin Grove," or "Wood an' Married an' a'," was likely to forget it. His voice had lost some of its power and sweetness,

but had greatly gained in dramatic expression, and this was enhanced by the vigorous play of feature and of hands, and by the sudden shifting from place to place—marching in time to heroic refrain—flinging himself into attitude, now as the lover, now as the yielding maiden, now as the arrogant foe, now as the brave defender. Here is a report of his appearance on the platform of the Scottish Literary Society :—

Long silvery hair and a wide turned-over shirt-collar recalled to memory the late Professor Wilson, but the resemblance ceased—unless, indeed, the good-humour pervading the finely cut features of Professor Blackie be taken, though differing in quality, to be the same as used to light up the more massive face of the immortal Christopher.

The fees for this lecture were paid into the fund for the Celtic Chair. It furnished matter for letters from a host of Scotchmen at home and abroad, ready to follow his standard in the fray. It is hardly possible to point to a single peaceful utterance by the Professor in public. His speeches and lectures are never tranquil expositions of their subjects. His rhetoric was ever launched against the foe, his vivacity was pointless unless shafted to pierce. They were bloodless blows indeed that he dealt, and extorted laughter from their victims, because, keen

as he was and ready with taunt and challenge, he was utterly free from personal animosity, from rancour, and from envy, and was astonished when in fair verbal fight he drew wrath and invective to himself. He waged war on views and habits, on fashions and opinions, which he disliked, not upon persons,—although the names of persons figured in his diatribes as representative of their theories. A correspondence on the subject of Scottish music occupied some columns of the ‘Scotsman’ during the last week of March, and the Professor contributed a letter on the 27th of the month which summed up his gospel thereanent,—a gospel to be preached in season and out of season for the remainder of his life.

On May 1 he read a paper to the members of the Royal Society on the subject of the Ossianic controversy, the report of which in the ‘Scotsman,’ meagre though it was, pleased Dr Clerk of Kilmallie greatly.

John Campbell will not answer you [wrote the translator],—he can’t; but he will contradict you, and repeat his contradiction ten times over, though you should convince all the world except himself. He is a wonderful collector, but he does not know Gaelic with any degree of accuracy,—great “*circa Celtica*,” nothing “*in Celticis*.” I hope your lecture will be published separately and widely circulated. It will do a world of good.



“John Campbell” wrote :—

If you want to kick up more dust, send me a copy of your speech for review and I'll pitch into you. I will send you my writing, if I write, and you can get it printed if you like. What mean you by “scrappy”? I find that word together with “scratchy” applied to my own writings; but if Macpherson's materials were scraps, how about his grand Gaelic originals? May your coppers increase, and the basis of your chair be broad as the Pyramids of Egypt.

FAILTE!

Professor Campbell Shairp came from St Andrews expressly to hear the paper, and endorsed its argument with his agreement.

The Gaelic Society at Inverness elected the Professor as its chief about this time.

He was in correspondence with all the living versifiers in the Gaelic language, and was busy making translations from their works. “In sober truth,” wrote Dugald Macphail, the Mull poet, and contributor to the ‘Gael,’ “I don't consider myself worthy of notice as a Gaelic poet. I love and admire the language, and these passions intensify the more I study and know it.” His poem on Mull is answer enough to this modest disclaimer :—

“My blessing, fair Mull, shall be constant with thee,  
And thy green-mantled Bens, with their roots in the sea!”

John Campbell of Ledaig was an old friend,

a neighbour indeed in summer, whose acquaintance visits to Connel Ferry had cultivated ; and Mary Mackellar was an occasional visitor in Hill Street. Specimens of their verses are to be found translated by Professor Blackie and Sheriff Nicolson in the 'Language and Literature of the Highlands,' with whose concluding pages the author was now busy.

An Inquiry Commission for the Scottish Universities commenced its work in 1875, and he had been in correspondence with several of its members during the year. Its slow processes brought about in the end some of the reforms which he had demanded during nearly half a century, amongst them the preliminary examination for all students intending to qualify for a degree. A letter received in May from Mr J. A. Froude, who served on this leisurely Commission, is interesting rather from its frankly-admitted ignorance than from its value to the history of University Reform :—

Beyond having assented to a request that I would be a member of the Scottish Universities Commission, which I received some months ago, I have not heard another word about it. I know not who my colleagues are—or for what object the Commission has been appointed. You, it appears, know all about it. You know, or imply, that we are to sit in Scotland and not in London. You cannot do better than enlarge your present letter by giving me all

the information which you possess. I am sorry to give you so much trouble, but to-morrow being Sunday, you will have leisure from all harder duties than listening to a sermon, and you can spare me a few minutes. My own ideas are the vaguest. I should like to see *one* Scotch University to be made really *brilliant* by Endowment, and, if necessary, a grant from the Crown,—the four present Universities to relinquish their privilege of granting degrees and to become colleges. A change like this, however, may be undesirable for many reasons with which I am not acquainted. At any rate, I conceive no such scheme is likely to be preferred or listened to at present. We shall confine ourselves to less ambitious details, and I do not think that you and I are likely to differ widely about them.

The possibility of such a smiting hip and thigh of our Scottish Universities could have occurred only to the self-complacent provincialism of an Oxonian, and must have been received with Homeric laughter by the Professor. He watched the consultations of the Inquiry Commission, its resolution into three Executive Commissions, and their modicum of reform achieved, with unabated interest, and had much to say on the subject fifteen years later, when their course was run.

The summer was spent at Altnacraig, with excursions to Mull and Cantyre during parts of August and September. Dr and Mrs Hanna were amongst the summer guests, and Dr

Robert Wyld was there on July 29, when the host's sixty-seventh birthday was kept, and he gave the toast at dinner in words of loving testimony to a friendship more than half a century old.

August 10 found him at Loch Baa, whence he wrote to Mrs Blackie :—

Since I came here I have been busied in a strange way. The wall of this unique establishment inside is all scrawled over with curious, significant sketches by John Campbell, Lord Colin, and Lord Archibald: also the Princess has tried her artistic hand and immortalised John Campbell at full length on the wall at the left side of the fireplace. There is a blank on the right, which, as soon as I came in, the quick eye of J. F. Campbell pounced on as a convenient niche for immortalising me; so down he sat, with me before him, and I am done off already on a sheet of brown packing-paper, to be cut out and pasted on the wall.

J. F. C. and I are examining glacial grooves and scratches, and discussing the ruin of Highland estates.

No doubt the Ossianic controversy waxed and waned o' nights, and Dr Cumming and Dr Hanna listened amazed to their explosive eloquence. By the 21st, Dr Hanna and the Professor had left Loch Baa for Calgary, near Tobermory,—“the most delightful, snug little sea-corner imaginable. If any place yet visited by me is entitled to be called the end of the world, it is Calgary.

Send all such letters as are worth reading, not 'bothers' or 'blethers.'"

Back to Loch Baa on the 26th, when the whole party took to fishing, and the Professor, to his own great astonishment, caught an unspecified monster weighing a pound and a half. He stayed over a Sunday, and then started on foot for Ulva, Pennyghael, Salen, and Loch Buie, his consecutive halting-places, where he picked up cheques for the Chair.

Towards the middle of September he left Altnacraig again to give two lectures at Callander; and with short breathing-space he went to Balnakill near Tarbert, to pay Mr Mackinnon of the Oriental Company a visit, and to make from his house a thorough exploration of the Mull of Cantyre. His host, later Sir William Mackinnon, gave him £200 towards the Celtic Chair, a donation which only the Queen and Mr M'Lean of Redcastle in Otago, N.Z., had equalled. Amongst the circle of guests were two of the very earliest contributors of £100 each, and he levied toll from the others.

The country here is full of green lanes and leafy woods, and much less Highland than Oban. Within the house hilarity and sobriety, humanity and piety, prevail,—a thoroughly healthy atmosphere.

Steam-yacht excursions occupied the days, one

of them to Islay; but there was only time for a glance at Mr Ramsay’s new house, and the deer that spotted the lawn “as thick and tame as sheep.”

When he returned to Altnacraig, it was “to gather up the fag-ends of the summer, and gird up loins for the winter.”

The issue of his book on ‘The Language and Literature of the Highlands’ greeted his return to Hill Street. It was dedicated to her Grace Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll. The Gaelic language with its imported elements occupied the first chapter, while the others dealt with its literature, ancient, medieval, modern, and immediate. Chapter IV. handled the Ossianic questions rather in the spirit of impartial narration than of polemics, and may be read as genuine information, and as a somewhat rare specimen of the Professor in a neutral attitude. Perhaps the general clash of arms over Macpherson blunted his eagerness, for it is certain that he preferred to do battle single-handed, and that at signs of a backing he was apt to leave the field. On the whole, he leant to Dr Clerk’s views, which in less judicial circumstances he was wont to advocate. The most interesting chapters of the book are those which treat of the Gaelic poets of Jacobite and later times,—

Iain Lom, Macdonald, Duncan Ban, and Rob Donn.

The volume was cordially received, and helped on the fund which led to its preparation. Perhaps best worth quoting of the many congratulatory letters which he received is one from the late Duke of Sutherland:—

The book is most interesting to us Highlanders. And now I am going to scold you. Why did I not see you at Lairg this season? You would have enjoyed seeing what a large piece of land is under crop, and what Highland hands can do. You must come next season.

Early in November Professor Blackie attended a banquet in the Balmoral Hotel in honour of Mr R. H. Wyndham, for many years manager of the Theatre Royal in Edinburgh. Sir Alexander Grant was in the chair, and the guests numbered more than a hundred of the representative men of Scotland. The toast of "The Drama" fell to the Professor, and his speech was a full expression of his lifelong position towards the influential art. After alluding to a boyhood whose cravings for the theatre were starved by paternal interdict, he went on to state with reasoned eloquence his own estimate of the best drama:—

It is the only form of art which combines everything that makes a man a man; it combines lyric poetry and

the narrations of epic poetry; it combines the highest ideal of heroism and the most minute features in the variety of character in common life; it combines the good and the beautiful; it combines the instructive and the entertaining; it is the highest form of art, and if therefore any nation is not exalted in this form of art, it is not a nation to whom God has given the mission of preaching the highest things that belong to the human race. I have not been a habitual frequenter of the theatre, but whenever I could spare a free evening I have gone to see the play that had the run of the season, but I never went to see a play that had anything base or degrading in it. When I was in London five or six years ago there were two plays which had the run of the season; the one was called "Leah," and the other was called "The Bells." The whole moral of "Leah" is the evangelical virtue of forgiveness. And if it ever was possible for a preacher using the styles of conventional theology—if it was ever possible for him to make men feel the horror of a violated conscience, he could not present a sermon more impressive than is exhibited before us in that noble melodrama, "The Bells."

Is it not a strange thing that in modern times, with our high-strung religion, we have made a divorce between the stage and morality and religion, whereas in ancient times, growing out of mere joviality,—out of the harvest-home, as it were,—there came up a Greek tragedy, which became a pulpit from which you have sermons upon conscience which go to move the inner strings of the heart as much as any sermon which was ever preached. Recall the opening chorus of "Agamemnon," or read the choruses of "Eumenides," and tell me if it is not a most monstrous thing for men preaching the Gospel to say that there is anything in these tending to a divorce between the Church



and the Theatre. Leave the theatre to drift, and depend upon it that if they who are God's servants do not know how to use it, the devil is far too clever a fellow not to use it for his own business. I beg to propose the modern Drama, and especially in its union with the Christian Gospel.

These were bold words to utter in the capital of Scotland, and they horrified the Free Churchmen of the north, against whom the speaker levelled many an interjected personality, better now omitted. The speech made a stir, not only amongst those who decried the stage, but, very naturally, amongst those actors who, loving their profession and honouring it, sought to save it from "the devil's business." A sheaf of letters testifies to their interest in Professor Blackie's advocacy. From this sheaf one may be drawn for quotation, from Henry Irving. It is dated 12th November 1876 :---

Opinion will always differ [he wrote] about such matters, but on one point there can be no dispute, that the opening up the subject at this time, and in so genial a spirit, and with the endorsement of a name so honoured as your own, is a gallant act, for which all who respect the stage, as well as those who minister about the temple, must sincerely thank you,—and not those alone, but all who value an honest, manly expression of opinion. For myself, I became an actor because I loved the drama, and every word said in its behalf, as a great social power to elevate mankind, finds an echo in my heart. Tens of thousands feel the influence of the theatre during six days

of the week—against the pulpit with only one day, and with relatively fewer listeners; and knowing this, all true moralists wish that this great power may be used for *good*. Nothing will more certainly tend to the elevation of the stage than the encouragement of men like yourself, whose judgment in matters referring to the culture of the generation growing up should be final.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## EGYPT.

1876-1879.

A CORRESPONDENCE in the 'Scotsman,' roused by Professor Blackie's poem called "Canaries and Creeds," indicates the troubled waters of theological controversy in Scotland during that year and those following. The epoch had its loud pretensions to infallibility, its response in the acclaim of the ignorant; its inquisitors, its traitors, its martyrs, its outcome of the triumph of a wider revelation for which its martyrs suffered, and for which they now are crowned.

Occupied with his College duties and with lectures at Galashiels, Linlithgow, and Govan, he was able to grant Mrs Blackie a very unwonted leave of absence in London, where a new but already greatly valued friend had

claimed her presence. This was Miss Pipe of Laleham, who became acquainted with Altnacraig in the summer of 1876, and whose school in Clapham Park had for many years heralded and achieved the larger, stronger, and more radical education for girls, now become a commonplace of our time.

During his wife's absence many letters on the subject of his book on Gaelic reached him, and on her return he went north to Inverness for a couple of days on Celtic Chair business. On this subject Mr Froude wrote to him early in February :—

If you are to preserve your native wild Flora, your Gaelic saxifrages and mountain roses, you must preserve them yourselves, as the Welsh do. You yourself are acting well and wisely in protesting against so interesting a relic of other times being allowed to die. But Gaelic, I suppose, can only be really kept alive like one of ourselves—by continuing to live. As long as songs and hymns are composed in Gaelic which have a hold upon the people, so long the language will subsist, and not, I suppose, longer.

Mr Froude was in Edinburgh again and again during the earlier months of 1877, as the Commission of Inquiry held its first sittings there, and the correspondents met oftener than once.

Another letter on the subject of his book came from Government House, Ottawa :—

How can I sufficiently thank you for having remembered me in my exile [wrote Lord Dufferin], and for sending me your charming volume, which, although it has only been three days in the house, I have almost run through? I was extremely interested in the philological part, and some of the ballads are very fine. I must also thank you in the name of all play-lovers for your defence of the Theatre. I do believe that if the salt of the earth were not to set their faces so against it, their countenance would do much, at all events, to keep a certain number of London theatres in the right path. On my way to British Columbia I got through the 'Odyssey,' and am now deep in Thucydides for the third or fourth time. One never tires of either, but I confess I have the bad taste to prefer the 'Odyssey' to the 'Iliad.'

The morning budget of letters deserves a passing word. The Professor's classification into "Bothers, Blethers, Beggars, and Business" hardly covered its variety. A post-card from Robert Browning in learned discussion of older and later Greek; a lengthy appeal from a pious Jesuit to listen to the burden of scholastic argument and forswear the levities of independent judgment; an inquiry from some obscure sectarian in America as to the sacramental character of feet-washing; three or four requests for a lecture, an article, a photograph, an autograph; some pages of unsolicited advice from an anonymous correspondent; a roll of illegible MS. from an aspiring playwright; a song dedicated

to himself; a cheque for the Celtic Chair; an outburst of affection from a Highlander beyond the seas; and half-a-dozen demands for money,—these form a sample of a morning's delivery to his address. He enjoyed opening and reading his letters, and he enjoyed answering the greater part of them. Only anonymous and impertinent effusions were put in the fire; the others were answered as favourably as possible. He wrote rapidly, far from legibly, but always briefly and with point; and he took his correspondence as part of the day's work, to be discharged at once if possible, and with as much consideration for the writers as their attitude permitted.

The breakfast hour was an interesting time, often a merry one, as envelope after envelope gave up its contents grave and gay, which he communicated to all present with appreciation or wise laughter. Perhaps the letters most valued were those from students, present and past, at home and abroad. He kept nearly all of these, and rejoiced over them when they breathed gratitude and affection for the teacher and friend whom they addressed. How often his charity went forth to those who entreated it, is known only to the friends who witnessed it in constant exercise. Articles written for magazines, the editions of 'Self-Culture,' and

other literary work, brought in an annual sum of money which he regarded as pocket-money. It was spent almost entirely in unrecorded gifts to the needy. The writer remembers a winter during which £120 was so acquired and so distributed, and not one of these gifts was blazoned in a subscription-list or trumpeted to the giver's credit. His name appeared in many a printed list; but the daily help to poor students, to poor literary men, to widows and to orphans, belonged not to the advertisement columns, but to the altar of Him who seeth in secret.

A suggestion made by Professor Hodgson that Wales might prove enthusiastic about the Celtic Chair led to his lecturing at Cardiff and Swansea early in May 1877; but he prefaced his labours with a little tour in the country of Burns and a visit to Whithorn. The walk in Ayrshire refreshed his mind with a glimpse of the shrines sacred to the poet, who was the text chosen for his lectures. From Girvan he drove along the sea-shore to Stranraer, where he spent a night, and went on next day to Whithorn, the earliest mission-station in Scotland, where St Ninian preached two centuries before St Columba's advent.

A pious desire to spend the Sunday in that sacred region led me thither on a Saturday; and the heavens, cold but bright, were favourable. This is a most bleak,

bare, and grey old place, on the extreme south nose of Scotland; but to any one who can drag in the past to interpret and to decorate the present, it possesses no common charm, and I spent two happy nights there. Beside the parish church, where I attended forenoon service, the four walls of the old church still stand, overgrown with ivy, and showing on one side an old Saxon door. About two and a half miles farther to the S.E., close by the sea-shore, is the shell of another old church, but less ornate in its style, both belonging to the period when "kings and queens and warriors bold came to crook their proud knees and keep their vows and lavish their gold for the dear grace to kiss St Ninian's bones." The pomp of Whithorn in those times, contrasted with the grey, grave, and bleak aspect of the same site on a Presbyterian Sunday, haunted my imagination and produced a sonnet.

From Portpatrick to Chester to visit Dean Howson, thence to Rhyl to make the acquaintance of Professor Rhys, and thence to Cardiff, where—his lecture well over—he was introduced to the docks and mighty industries of the place, occupied a week, and on May 6 he reached Swansea. On his way thither he halted

among the bare hills at Dowlais, amid armies of black chimneys spouting voluminous smoke from long, serried ranks of sleepless furnaces, where streams of liquid iron are flowing, like rills feeding a pandemonian Phlegethon. I was led through the fiery scenes of that stupendous city of Vulcan.

On leaving Swansea he went to London, and



stayed with Dr George Wyld in Great Cumberland Place. He was at once drawn into the customary vortex, but endured it for not more than a fortnight. His chief concern was to get a publisher for a book whose composition had filled the hours left at leisure after the issue of 'The Language and Literature of the Scottish Highlands.' This was 'The Wise Men of Greece'—a series of dramatic dialogues intended to place before the reader the older philosophers, each at a crucial moment, when the fundamental dogma of his teaching is brought into high relief. The dramatic fragments, although polished in his more recent leisure, were the outcome of years of hard study, and some of them were partially constructed before he shaped and linked them together in intelligent sequence. At first he meant to present only the continuous thought of pre-Socratic minds, but he could not bring himself to exclude Socrates and Plato from his exposition.

He showed the MS. to Mr Macmillan, who undertook its publication; and he dedicated the book to Mr Tom Taylor, as an indication of his esteem for the man, the writer, and the critic. Breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, with "all sorts and conditions of men," kept him in constant movement, and he managed as well to see "Rip Van Winkle," with Jefferson in the title rôle,

finding the play "extremely moral." He breakfasted twice with the Duke of Sutherland, and recognised his real goodness and greatness, which circumstances somewhat misrepresented, and perhaps somewhat confounded. On May 19 he fled to Cambridge, where he spent some days at St Peter's College Lodge—longer than he proposed, being overtaken by a sharp attack of illness as penalty for the hurry-scurry in town. He was well nursed, and in his convalescence read Ruskin's 'Fors Clavigera.' "What brilliant unreasonableness! what rare gems amid showers of sawdust! Every virtue of a good writer except Sense and Self-control."

He returned to Edinburgh in broken weather, and the voyage to Oban was undertaken in a storm.

The Free Church Assembly was busy with dubious work, beginning its persecution of Dr Robertson Smith, and he had to trust to correspondents for a full account of the pitiful scene. That the eventual result of stupidity, cowardice, shuffling, and rancour should prove to be increase of honour to Dr Robertson Smith, and of enlightenment to all students of the Bible, was not apparent then, and men could hardly look forward to a time when the paltry persecutors of that day would accept, without a twinge of remorse, the

larger knowledge of their victim, and attitudinise as progressive.

Why did Luther fling,  
chanted the Professor,

His ban against the Pope and his misdeeds,  
If private judgment must be caged in creeds,  
Each free word gagged, and clipt each upward wing,  
And you, with churchly ban and pulpit drum,  
Strike Bible readers blind and prophets dumb?

The proofs of 'The Wise Men' began to arrive towards the end of June, and he submitted them to Professor Campbell Shairp for criticism. Professor Shairp wrote that poems on Greek heroes were not of absorbing interest, but that he must admit the claim of the philosophers to universality, and that he had particularly enjoyed the revelation of Trinitarian orthodoxy on the part of Pythagoras!

Miss Isabella Bird was staying with her sister at Tobermory, and the Altnacraig party paid them a visit one long June day. The crofter's cottage which Miss Henrietta Bird had converted into a lady's bower inspired the Professor with the best of all his rhymed tributes to a woman. "The Lay of the Little Lady" deserves to live, as well for the daintiness of its versification as for the truth of its portraiture. It was translated into Gaelic by a Highland

friend, and is a folk-song in the island of Mull, where her beneficent presence was known and loved for many years :—

On the deep sea's brim,  
 In beauty quite excelling,  
 White and tight and trim,  
 Stands my lady's dwelling.  
 Stainless is the door,  
 With shiny polish glowing ;  
 A little plot before,  
 With pinks and sweet-peas growing.

Where a widow weeps,  
 She with her is weeping ;  
 Where a sorrow sleeps,  
 She doth watch it sleeping :  
 Where the sky is bright,  
 With one sole taint of sadness,  
 Let her heave in sight  
 And all is turned to gladness.

Later in the month Miss Isabella Bird was staying at Altnacraig, occupied with plans for her adventurous tour in the Japanese Islands, which she carried out in 1878, and which gave to the Western world its most readable book on that interesting country while the light of other days still lingered on its customs and social life, and before it had fully assimilated the long result of slow centuries in the West, and passed through the extraordinary revolution which a handful of years and impassioned energy have effected.

It was about the end of June that Professor Blackie sent an eloquent letter to the 'Scotsman' on the whole subject of the wrong done to the Highlands by the land and game laws, and by the depopulation consequent upon their exercise. The subject with which he had assailed the public ear for so long was at length reaching that organ, and was eventually to reach the public conscience. Letters from grateful Highlanders at home and in exile poured in upon him.

Early in July he started for a week's lecturing tour in the North, making his appearance on the Inverness platform as "Saxon Chief" of its Celtic society. He returned to join Dean Howson at Loch Baa, where the weather was wretched, and where he stayed only two days, taking the Dean with him to Altnacraig. A short stay with Dr and Mrs Kennedy, who were summering at Aberfeldy, occupied the last days of August, and September was made especially interesting by a visit to Taymouth towards the heart of the month. These seem to have numbered his wanderings for the season, which was occupied else with correcting proofs, with the study of 'Atheism expressed in articles for 'Good Words,' and with some modern psalms for the same journal.

His visit to Taymouth from the 17th to the

20th September was made memorable by the warm sympathy which he found there for all his Highland enthusiasms. Lady Breadalbane was as faithful a lover of Gaelic as he was himself, caring infinitely for her Highland home and her Highland people, and she entered into his hopes for the preservation of their language with an equal interest. The Professor lost his luggage on the road to Taymouth, and as it could not be recovered the first night, he had to descend to dinner arrayed in "toggerie belonging to the Earl"! But such incidents never tried his composure, and although a stately company, some thirty in number and including Prince Leopold, sat down to table, he thoroughly enjoyed the talk and the *tableaux vivants* afterwards, in which Lady Breadalbane took part as Joan of Arc and as Queen Guinevere. "It is worth travelling a thousand miles to see the Countess alone, so full of vitality, and nature, and dignity, and grace."

His closing weeks at Altnacraig were disquieted by rumours of the approaching railway, which two years later was in full possession of Oban, and which, strengthened by some secondary considerations, ultimately chased Professor and Mrs Blackie away from their home on the "sublime heights."

'The Wise Men of Greece' came out early in

November, and letters from Professor Schliemann, Dean Stanley, and Mr Gladstone, who "joined the chorus of acclaim," indicate a percentage of his kindly critics. Dean Stanley's note gives us a clue to a plan maturing in the Professor's mind to cast the slough of toils, literary, academical, and peripatetic, in the new year, and betake himself to the healing waters of the Nile for a period of oblivion and renewal. Before his plans could be carried out he paid a flying visit to London, to arrange with Mr Isbister for the publication of his 'Natural History of Atheism,' which was issued towards the close of 1877, and was reprinted in New York a year later by Messrs Scribner, Armstrong, & Co. His books had now considerable vogue in America, and the same firm had printed his 'Four Phases of Morals,' 'Self-Culture,' and the 'Songs of Religion and of Life.' The Highlanders alone in the States formed an admiring public for the works of the beloved "Apostle of the Celts," and their influence, as well as the exceptional worth of 'Self-Culture,' made him a revered and popular author amongst Americans. He was again and again asked to lecture across the Atlantic, but his hands were always too full on its hither shore to permit him to go; and perhaps his want of personal acquaintance with Americans led him to fear the stress and

strain of such a tour, where he had almost everything to learn, and where he foresaw that his reckless rhetoric might lead him into many pitfalls.

The labour connected with the Celtic Chair had begun to tell a little on his health and a good deal on his endurance, and he had brought the fund to so unexpected a stage of success that he had ample excuse for a respite from a kind of toil which was never congenial to him, although so vigorously and victoriously conducted. He got leave of absence from the University for his trip to Egypt towards the end of January, his friend Dr Donaldson taking the work of the Greek class during its term. Mrs Blackie, still in failing health, longed for a spring in Italy, and Mrs D. O. Hill, the friend of many years, decided on joining her, while Miss Alice Lewis, Mrs Blackie's niece, went with them as guide and interpreter in a land which had been her home for many years.

Before the start letters poured in anent the 'Natural History of Atheism.' Mr Froude was again in Edinburgh, busy with "the final revise of the Report" issued by the Inquiry Commission, and interested to find that one of his 'Short Studies' had been translated into Greek. "We regard Greek," he wrote on January 3, 1878, "as a sacred tongue in which only the very best of



everything has a right to be expressed. I feel myself converted at once into a classic!"

Introductions came pouring in from various quarters. The Duke of Sutherland sent several to friends in Cairo. "How you will enjoy yourself," he wrote, "and meet Scotchmen when you least expect it!" A young Greek in his class gave him letters to his relatives in Alexandria.

The party left Edinburgh on January 28, spent two nights in London, and reached Paris on the 30th, leaving the same evening for Marseilles, where the Professor took steamer to Alexandria, and the ladies rested before pursuing their way to Rome. His long journey predisposed the voyager for his berth, and he slept fourteen hours at a stretch. The transit lasted from February 1 to 6, a day longer than usual, for the wind blustered and the steamer rolled. Its tedium was relieved by a few hours at Naples, the only respite from storm. So welcome was Alexandria that he stayed there several days, receiving hospitality from Dr Yule, and from the pleasant Greek family to whom he had been recommended. As a set-off to his discomfort on the sea, and to the storm which raged at Alexandria, he spent his first evening at Dr Yule's in a mood of resentful patriotism, singing Scotch songs. It was an ill-omened arrival in

the land of the Pharaohs, and made an impression which he never overcame. Instruction, he admitted, was to be had in Egypt, but not enjoyment. He was too late for the Nile ; heat, dust, and baleful winds followed unwonted rain, and produced the lassitude and physical depression with which great heat affected him. But he addressed himself to travel and to tomb and temple inspection, after some study of Strabo in Alexandria. On February 10 he reached Cairo, and was greeted there with rain and wind, which lasted several days, and accompanied him on the 12th, when he went on board Cook's steamer. By the 26th he was at Luxor, and found Mr Campbell of Islay there before him, the sole lord of a roomy *dahabecah*, in which he entertained the Professor to dinner. Walking towards Thebes about sunset, he encountered a big tortoise on its slow progress, and stopped to enjoy the sight. He rejoined his fellow-travellers, exclaiming, "A well-to-do old gentleman out for his evening walk." A few days at Luxor, where Dr Appleton was staying, and proved to be the best and kindest of guides, was his most enjoyable experience in Egypt. On the way to Philæ the heat was oppressive. "Once for all," he wrote, "the East does not suit me either physically or morally—only I am glad to have seen it."

He effervesced in sonnets, which relieved his lively sense of wrong, and rehearsed the everlasting plagues of Egypt. Guides, donkey-boys, Arabs, heat, dust, insects, and the general tendency to take him in tow and shackle his movements inured to freedom, form the burden of twenty-three effusions, happily forgotten. Abu-Simbel compensated for some of the plagues, and the power and repose of the great Rameses' face partially restored his equanimity, but he rejoiced when the downward voyage began and the explorations ceased. Temples and tombs palled upon him, and there were no ladies on board to mitigate their dull reiteration. However, he found his fellow-travellers genial enough for mere males, and came to terms with one of them, who, taking the Nile on his homeward journey from India, was the possessor of a pith helmet, which he exchanged for the Professor's wideawake. This structure was cool and striking, and pleased its new owner on both grounds. He liked distinctive dress, and when he returned to Cairo, purchased an Eastern shawl of many colours, which he wore wound round his waist like an Albanian klepht. A crimson sash was a favourite adornment at home, dating ever since a friend had embroidered one for a bygone birthday, and Oban was used to its presence in his summer

equipment. But his appearance in Cairo must have been more impressive.

He stayed there sixteen days, giving up his intended tour in Palestine, and consoling himself with the Boulak Museum. The heat daunted him and sapped his enterprise. On March 29, however, he summoned up courage for the Pyramid of Khufu, and scorned all assistance from Arab guides in the ascent. When he reached the top he conceived a great contempt for the "arithmetical sublimity" of the structure, which seemed to him to border on the ridiculous. He was unable to admire the post-mortem glory of the Pharaohs, being always inclined to appreciate the past from his own standard of worth in the present. Two other Scotchmen were with him, and the three aired their nationality by singing "Scots wha hae" at the top, asserting that Robbie Burns was a bigger man with a grander fame than Khufu or Kephren. He wrote notes to Sir Alexander Grant, and to his wife and aunt, in fulfilment of farewell promises. That to Mrs Blackie runs:—

*Top of the Great Pyramid, 29th March, 11.30 A.M.*

Here is a greeting for you from the peak from which sixty centuries look down. Cherish the sacred memory of Cheops.—Your faithful Pro.

Coming down was not so independent a process

as going up: he was glad of the help of his three Arabs, whose company he had so resented, and he felt shaky and dislocated when the business was fairly over.

His introductions procured him plenty of pleasant society, as well as an invitation from the Khedive to a ball at Abdeen Palace, held on April 4. Mr Vivian supplied the needful garments from his own wardrobe, and the Professor went under his wing. But he was neither edified nor diverted, and was with some difficulty restrained from giving the Khedive a bit of his mind on extravagance

On April 11 he wrote :—

This is my penultimate day in the land of mummies, crocodiles, and drifting sands,—rags, ruins, beggary, and simooms. I go off to-morrow for Alexandria, whence we sail on Saturday, going round by the Levant,—to reach Palermo, I understand, on the 29th.

This voyage refreshed and restored him. Dr Appleton was with him, and the steamer touched at Beyrout, Jaffa, and Smyrna, giving him opportunities for a run to Tarsus and a sight of Ephesus.

On board this most excellent ship I have plenty of fresh air, plenty of leisure, good company, and a constant succession of fine panoramic views of a coast not inferior in various beauty to the lovely sail from Oban to Gairloch,

and much superior, of course, in historic incident. When at Mersina, a harbour in Cilicia, where we shipped incalculable bales of cotton, I took the opportunity of running up to Tarsus, which lies about fifteen miles to the N.E. of the town. The drive lay across the flat plain of Cilicia, very fertile but very treeless, till we came to a bouncing stream and rich gardens of orange and fig trees, with rows of poplars standing up against the sky. The town is small, but has a fair inn, a good proportion of shops, and an aspect of business; but the only remains of antiquity is an old arch—the Western Gate, I presume, of the city, under which St Paul no doubt often walked, thinking unutterable things, when a boy.

I have written five letters to the ‘Scotsman’ descriptive of our voyage, which you will see in due season.

Palermo was reached on April 30, and he spent the first four days of May in Sicily, seeing Girgenti, Syracuse, Taormina, and Messina. At Girgenti he was mobbed by a crowd of youths, who, from

a quite laudable curiosity, made researches into the character of a strange-looking, white-haired old gentleman, walking on his own legs, with a many-coloured Turkish sash about his loins, and having his head topped with one of Watson & Co.’s Bombay ventilator-caps, of a conical shape, very much like the head-gear of those formidable gentlemen the Prussian soldiers.

Out of the mob two or three bright young students rallied to his assistance, and served as his guide to the lions of the ancient Agrigentum.

Mrs Blackie was at Naples, and on May 5 he

joined her there, and the quartette moved north to Rome, Florence, and Venice. There a great trouble overtook them. Miss Lewis fell ill of typhoid fever, and they were detained for a month during the hot weeks of June and early July. Mrs Blackie's health was severely strained by anxiety and nursing, and when eventually they were allowed to travel, two invalids instead of one had to endure the fatigue of long railway journeys and night halts. They were compelled to shorten the stages to seven hours daily, and their route lay through the Dolomites and by the Brenner Pass to Innsprück, thence to Munich and Bonn. At Bonn the Professor's patience had to be stayed with sonnets. It was thus he waited :—

Another, and another, and another  
Day on the toilsome road that drags us home.  
O for one quiet careless hour beside  
My own Scotch hearth, or 'mid my green grass dells,  
With breezy pine-trees waving, and the pride  
Of purple heather, foxglove, and bluebells !  
Grant me this, God, and teach my soul to cease  
From thoughts that travel far, and ways that find no peace.

His soul proved unteachable. These constant records of travel, tedious to many a reader, are inseparable from the story of his life. Movement was an essential part of his vitality, an imperious need. Like Ulysses, he “would not rest from travel,” and he found it “dull to pause, to make

an end." In that he resembled, too, the restless Erasmus, as in so much else of the more erudite Dutchman's character and nimbleness. It is impossible to expunge the notes of his constant itineraries from his biography, as with them would go the very impulses of what he was to his world, and on that ground the writer must crave indulgence for the endless rehearsal of his journeys.

By the last day of July they were at Altnacraig, Mrs. Blackie's health undermined and her nervous system shattered. He walked about for an hour in the cool of the eve before entering the house, drinking in the peace of his Highland seclusion.

The affairs of the Celtic Chair Fund now engaged his attention. Mr Beith had transacted them during his absence, and they were highly prosperous. It was necessary to draw up a statement for the Committee, and the books showed that a sum of £11,725 had been collected. It was decided to continue the investment of this money, to make it up to £12,000 by April 1879, and to leave that sum intact for two years until it sufficed for an endowment of over £500 a-year. The money was invested on landed security. The Professor did not stint his labours until the result aimed at was secured.

Two summer months passed quickly away, a



visit to Loch Baa alone breaking their welcome repose.

I like talking to you better than writing, so get into the boat and come here [wrote the Duke of Sutherland from Dunrobin in September]; we will talk about men and lasses being better than sheep.

But he resisted the tempting summons.

In October he had to return alone to Edinburgh, Mrs Blackie going to Wemyss Bay for change. The College session opened a week earlier than usual. He stayed with his brother-in-law, Major Wyld, in Inverleith Row.

We are getting on very swimmingly here: in the evening we take a rattle at backgammon, and the Major enlarges on his Indian campaigns in an amusing and edifying style. My Celtic Chair Report comes out tomorrow. The classes open on Tuesday. I have written out part of a lecture on "The Study of Modern Languages" for the 'Scotsman.'

This letter is dated October 23. One written two days earlier speaks of a pleasant luncheon-party, where he met Miss Ferrier, daughter of the metaphysician.

With her I entered into various serious conversations about Episcopalian and other Churches. She said she could stand St — no longer; its monotony and mechanical routine and general ditch-water dulness were too intolerable. She is healthy, cheerful, and very lovable; so I hope you will take her under your wing some

summer, as you always know how to cherish good specimens of your own sex.

Mrs Blackie returned in time for the opening session, and his winter's work began. It included a run to London at the end of November to preside at a Celtic gathering there, but he was back in three days. He spent an evening at Westminster Deanery, and gave Dean Stanley his "Nile Litany," a tirade against the plagues of Egypt, composed at Luxor. Invoking Ra, Osiris, Anubis, and other local powers, he entreats protection against crocodiles, sand, dust, and flies, against *baksheesh*, antico-vendors, donkey-boys, and "all the haggling crew that buzz and fuss with much ado," and he makes a vow to all

The gods in Ramses' stately hall  
 At Karnak on the Nile-stream,  
 . . . . .  
 Never more with sweaty toil  
 To frighten frog or crocodile  
 Up the yellow Nile-stream ;  
 . . . . .  
 Nevermore to stir the stones  
 For mummy rags or blackened bones  
 At Memphis or Abydos ;  
 . . . . .  
 Far from Scotia's darling seat,  
 Nevermore with weary feet  
 To dust it up the Nile-stream :  
 All this, good Osiris,  
 I swear it by the Nile-stream !"

The Dean wrote on Dec. 2 :—

MOST WICKED BUT MOST DEAR PROFESSOR,—I have read with much laughter and keenly awakened recollections of the Nile your daring Litany, which, however, as it is but a “bit of paper,” I should, had I obeyed your maxim of Saturday night, have thrown into the fire, as interfering, like every other *litera scripta*, with the spontaneous and extempore development of my free prophetic power. Alas! when I think of the anxiety of our dear and most valued Archbishop at Edinburgh, I can hardly write with a light heart.

The opening year, 1879, brought him a gift of memories made precious by death, the Duchess of Argyll and his Nile comrade Dr Appleton passing away in its early weeks. Dr Appleton had returned to London the previous summer apparently well, but the first autumnal damps sent him back to Luxor, and there on February 1 he was buried.

The Professor was casting about for an occupant to the Celtic Chair, and consulting all and sundry upon the qualifications essential. It was difficult to decide whether the new Professor should be a great Celtic philologist of any nationality, or mainly a student of Gaelic, Welsh, and Erse, and of Highland race.

He was in correspondence, too, with the late Dr Birch of the British Museum, who sent him a hieroglyphic rendering of his name,

"Chief of the Bards Blackie," in return for the "Litany."

At the "Blackie Brotherhood" banquet held on December 27, his return from Egypt was sung in jocund rhyme by Sheriff Nicolson, the bard of that festive body:—

"Many were his lively jinks  
 In the country of the Sphinx;  
 Natives he astonished there,  
 Copt and Moslem he gar'd stare;  
 Quick of Arabs he got rid,  
 Climbing Cheops' Pyramid,  
 And when on the top he sprung,  
 'Scots wha hae' with birr he sung.  
     To the land of Bruce and Burns  
     Very welcome he returns.  
     Tell the news in brugh and glen,  
     Blackie he is come again!

Now with spirits full of glee  
 Blackie in his place we see;  
 Scotland when he was away  
 Seemed more empty than to-day:  
 Let the times be e'er so sad,  
 Let the world go e'er so mad,  
 Pious thanks and cheerful mood  
 Well become this Brotherhood!  
     Sing then, ye unworldly men,  
     Blackie he is come again;  
     Tell the news in brugh and glen,  
     Blackie he is come again!"

Mrs Blackie's health gave cause for anxiety all winter, and she shrank from the fitting to Altna-

craig. As spring drew near, it was decided that she should go first to Dunblane Hydropathic, and then to Moulin, near Pitlochry, to a little cottage there, and so escape the long summer of house-keeping and hospitality.

This left the Professor free to carry out a project left over from the year before. He had missed Rome then, and wished to make good the defect, and to study there some aspects of the agrarian question in Italy. His mind was much exercised with the lapse into malarial sterility of large tracts of what in ancient days was fruitful farm and garden land. Dr Steele, an old student settled in the Via Condotti, invited him to begin these studies as his guest, and promised him much of immediate interest in the world of archæology and politics.

He started for London on April 21, 1879, "free at last from business, bothers, and blethers." In the train he studied "the mysteries of wages, rent, profit, &c., about three times as much as I could have done in the extremely accessible place called the study in 24 Hill Street."

A peep into the House of Commons and calls on various publishers and editors completed his doings in town, and he left on the 25th for Paris, and thence on the 27th for Turin. Here he stayed long enough to see the city and its

memorials of the liberation of Italy, and to climb its neighbouring heights. He was at Genoa by the 30th, and at Pisa next day. There, the hotel company being scant and uninspiring, he devoted his after-dinner solitude to the composition of three sonnets on "The Virgin Mary," "Garibaldi," and "Columbus," trailing some clouds of reminiscence from Turin and Genoa.

On May 3 he reached Rome and his hosts in the Via Condotti. By this time he had cast his winter coat, and he fluttered into the capital in a suit of light tweed, and a white wideawake of the soft-crowned, wide-brimmed variety, which he preferred. His first impulse, after breakfast next day, was to go to St Peter's. He had not seen the great Cathedral for half a century, but felt familiar with its precincts—as who does not, having once measured its cheerful floor?

He began his reading at once with a book just written by Signor Minghetti, whose acquaintance he had the good fortune to make. The book was a stiff treatise on 'Public Economy,' but he tackled it manfully, not without a sense of strangeness in the Italian terminology. The weather was broken, storm followed storm. "C'è il demonio chi porta la moglie in carrozza!" ("It's the devil taking his wife a drive!") said the cook.

On May 10 he called on Minghetti,

with whom I had some interesting talk on the state of public affairs in Rome, and on the economical condition of the *Agro Romano*, which I have been studying zealously here for a week. At first I was quite in the dark, but now begin to see clearly that it is the large properties, along with the devastation of centuries and the curse of a hieratico-aristocratic government, that are chiefly to blame for the damnable offence of turning this paradise of busy men into a favourite hunting-ground of the Plague.

An interesting episode is recorded in his letter of May 13 :—

At eleven o'clock yesterday we drove to the palace of Cardinal Howard. The lord of the manor was not there himself, being engaged with the other cardinals holding a consistory for the purpose of creating a batch of new cardinals and other ecclesiastical business. We had to wait in the hall of audience, all hung with flaming cardinal's colour, for an hour at least. Here I amused myself by being introduced or talking to half-a-dozen people, besides half-a-dozen others who recognised me. The room was not large, and so crowded with ring behind ring of worshipping expectants that I had to stand on tiptoe to get a sight of the great pervert when he came in. However, I happened to be in the part of the room where the radius was nearest to him, and I got a distinct impression of his physiognomy, strong in the upper region, but rather weak below, I suppose from lack of teeth. But if my view of the personal presentation was only by glimpses,—for Newman sat all the while, being too weak to stand,—I had the good luck to hear every word distinctly which he spoke—in English with a

clear mellow voice, and in a chaste sequence of sentences in perfect harmony with the fine tone of the sentiments. The substance was exactly what I expected. The doubts and struggles, negatives and threatened anarchies, of modern Liberalism, had thrown him back on the visible unity of God's eternal truth presenting itself to the Western world, and there he found peace and comfort to his soul. It was a moral gain to have heard it from the lips of so good and gracious a man; but a more illogical proceeding cannot well be imagined.

Two pieces of news reached him from Edinburgh, both grievous and regretted—Dr Hodgson's retirement from the Chair of Political Economy, and Professor Kelland's death. Of the latter he wrote :—

I was not surprised to hear of the final dismissal of dear old Kelland from his terrestrial services. He was drooping all winter like a flower with a broken stalk, and it is pleasant to remember with what a bright flash of humour and Christian geniality he departed. I am now the Nestor. . . . I have fallen in love with a man in a book called '*I miei Ricordi*,' di Massimo Azelio. It is full of wisdom and manhood and deep glances into the private places of Italian life at the commencement of the present century.

His visit to Dr Steele came to an end about the middle of May, and he chose a lodging far away from the haunts of Englishmen, in the topmost storey of No. 15 Piazza di Monte Vecchio, where he could resume his own un-



trammelled ways—wandering, studying, noting, selecting, and paying just such visits as pleased himself. He took his morning coffee in the Piazza Navona; made friends with the people—“delightfully simple-minded, friendly, and superlatively polite”; went for long walks on the Campagna and amongst the Alban hills; dined or lunched with the Minghettis or other Roman resident; and scrupulously avoided John Bull abroad.

On May 19 he wrote :—

We are in the full enjoyment of the most delightful summer weather, and I am in the full swing of Roman visits, Roman excursions, and Roman studies, which, alas! must end before they are more than conscious of their commencement. You can picture me in my sublime garret, very serene amid considerable disorder and small discomforts, with an array of books and pamphlets—all Italian—covering the table and waiting to be put into shape by the little busy brain of that wonderful little moth called man.

He records a most interesting conversation with Madame Minghetti on the low status of women in Italy—a matter now slowly mending.

She has been twice married, and after her experience of Neapolitan Marcheses and Princes, who are the merest fribbles of humanity, and yet think it their highest privilege and dominant duty to keep their wives under, so that they may be always a little more ignorant than

themselves, she was determined to marry a man who would treat her seriously. Minghetti is the leading thinker and speaker and writer of the Moderate party here, and is destined at no distant period to become Prime Minister of Italy.

He spent his last Roman Sunday afternoon at the Protestant cemetery, stopping at Goethe's *osteria* to meditate ; and on May 27 he left for Orvieto, where he spent two days, forgathering with Mr Rathbone from Liverpool, and visiting in his company the Etruscan tombs in the woods above the city.

He reached Florence on the 30th, and busied himself there with agrarian studies, visiting some of the neighbouring farms, with Mr Macdougall for companion and informant. He was so fortunate as to witness the festival of *Lo Statuto* on June 1, and enjoyed its pomp and display. A run to the Lakes, where he met Mr and Mrs Mudie, and shared their carriage from Luino to Lugano, ended his holiday in Italy ; and in spite of warning from his fellow-travellers, he crossed the Alps by the Splügen Pass with post and sledge, and arrived at Coire on the afternoon of June 8.

It was the most wonderful drive that I ever made, and will leave a perfect Pantheon of pictures in my mind. If I had yielded to timorous persuasions and returned by

Turin and the Mont Cenis Tunnel, I should have gone through life quite ashamed of myself, like a dog with tail not gallantly swirled up, but shamefully curled beneath its hurdies.

As “Apostle of the Celts” he digressed to St Gallen in search of the famous manuscript in its library, and this adventure is worth quoting :—

To be sure I could not read the old Irish characters, but I was the founder of the Celtic Chair, and to be within two hours’ journey of perhaps the oldest Celtic manuscript in the world, and not stir a foot to see it, would have been an unpardonable sin. The result was rather unfortunate. The moment I arrived I sent in my card to the Inspector of the Library, requesting special permission to examine the MS. The Inspector was unwell, but with politeness he requested me to present myself before his bed, where he lay and addressed me in very proper English. There were no difficulties. The old woman, his right hand in such matters, would go in with me and unlock the sacred cases in which these precious relics of old Hibernian learning and piety were preserved. We went : four cases were opened ; but I saw at a glance of each that they were all Latin or Greek or old German—certainly nothing that had the slightest look of either a Highlander or a Hibernian. Some mistake ! Back to the recumbent old gentleman, who explained that he had understood me to say that I wished to see certain old Latin MSS. written by Irish disciples of St Columba, not MSS. in the old Gaelic language : there was only one such, an Irish Glossary belonging to the Library, and it had been lent out, on special security

given, to a student of Celtic in Milan ! Well, I had at least done my duty, if not gratified my curiosity ; and this also was a consolation, that in Milan, the capital city of the old Celtic Insubres, where Gaelic was spoken several centuries before Latin was known in the world, one individual did exist who occupied himself with the most venerable study of his ancestors. Honour be to his name ! Might he not be fished up and invited to be first Professor of Celtic in the University of Edinburgh ? Well, another thing also I learned : the walls of the cloister are hung with curious old pictures representing the life and adventures and miraculous exploits of Gallus and Columbanus, both Irishmen of the sixth or seventh century, who brought Gospel and civilisation into these wild parts.

A glimpse of Constance and one of Frankfort precluded a visit of three days to Professor Pauli in Göttingen, one much enjoyed for its quiet, and for Dr Pauli's delightful singing of student songs. Some allusions to fatigue and to old ailments appear in these letters, and he was glad to get back to Edinburgh on June 18. Here he spent two days with Dr Walter C. Smith, writing on the 19th to Mrs Blackie : " Be greeted, fatherland, home, and wife ! " He joined her at Moulin on the 20th, and settled down to the joys of the little Highland retreat, to the refreshment of Ben Vrackie's peak and rolling slopes, and to the usual complement of letters and sonnets for the ' Scotsman,' describing his doings abroad.

He climbed Ben Vrackie one July day, and paid his homage in the evening :—

Thou art the queen and sovereign of this land,  
Which loves thy shelter and invites thy breeze,  
Whose nearer heights thy bluff old guardians stand,  
Or climb with green attendance up thy knees.  
I praise thy sharp peak neighboured with the stars,  
Thy keen pure air of lung-distending rareness,  
Thy hoar front battered with long windy wars,  
And the wild charm of thy far-stretching bareness.

It is amusing that he was invited about this time to contest the Inverness Burghs as a “Radical Jacobite”! He was at Inverness early in July, making his customary speech on Highland matters at the annual banquet there; but he did not linger in the North, being drawn back by the charm of the Perthshire hills, which held him till the last week of August. Already the tie to Altnacraig was loosened. The railway was making havoc of Oban and its neighbourhood; peace was gone from the road by the Sound of Kerrera. Miss Isabella Bird wrote to Mrs Blackie: “I fear that Pro.’s delight in Perthshire sounds the death-knell of Altnacraig.”

Late in August he set out on a round of visits to Taymouth, to Cluny, to Conan House, and to Skeabost in Skye. While at the last place he went to a school-inspection for the district of Snizort.

About 150 comely young persons of both sexes—generally clean and well-dressed, although one or two were rather ragged and dirty—screamed out with harsh voices some of the well-known English and Scotch songs generally sung in Lowland schools. Not being particularly edified with this exhibition, I asked for a Gaelic song ; but, as I expected, could get none : so little do the red-tape gentlemen up-stairs know of the first principles of moral education, one of which is to cultivate the heart by the agency of the mother-tongue and of popular song—the growth of the soil. The spirit immediately moved me to stand up and exhort the master and the scholars to the cultivation of native song ; and to nail down my exhortation, and suit the action to the word, I took a pound-note out of my purse, and wrapping a shilling in it, proclaimed a guinea prize for the best Gaelic song to be sung at next examination. Then, of course, three cheers were given for the Pro. The great event was the appearance of the *Ban-bhaird*, or poetess, who came forward and requested leave to sing a Gaelic song of her own composition, which she did with a wonderfully good voice, the subject of the poem being nothing less than a Pindaric celebration of the great Apostle of the Celts, commonly called the Pro. : this was received with oceans of applause, and the poetess concluded by following the Pro.'s example and giving a prize for Gaelic singing,—afterwards exchanging sticks with the Pro., to what effect you will see when I present my very unusual and original staff of travel which I received from the *Ban-bhaird*.

He went home by Oban, where he stayed a few days with Mrs Otter, and by Kingussie, where he picked up another stick, “strong, sturdy, and

formidable, which will do to knock the devil down if he should not behave well."

All his letters are full of regret that his wife is not with him, and that she misses so much that is good and beautiful.

In autumn the most interesting event was Mr Gladstone's visit to Scotland, and Professor Blackie was invited to meet him both at Taymouth and Dalmeny. At the latter place the old friends met, and differed about Homer and much else, and liked each other none the worse. He wound up his wanderings for the year by presiding at the Caledonian Association Festival at Manchester on St Andrew's Day, where the deficit in the fund for the Celtic Chair was more than made up—Bristol, "ten good Celts of Liverpool," Toronto, Hudson's Bay Factorymen, Lord Hartington, and Sheriff Nicolson having helped to complete this success. The fund exceeded £12,000, and his financial labours ended with 1879.

## CHAPTER XX.

## RETIREMENT FROM THE GREEK CHAIR.

1880–1882.

THE years from 1880 to 1885 are significant for the Professor's public utterances and writings on the Crofter question. His studies in Italy had been made for the express purpose of accustoming his mind to the consideration of all problems involved in the subject of land-tenure, varying as these problems do in the varying customs and conditions of that country. He was thus better fitted to deal with what was becoming a matter of immediate moment.

He began 1880 by lecturing in Glasgow on the Crofters, and "preached a sermon to the lairds with more than usual applause and acceptance." In February he issued a pamphlet on the subject, which treated of the passing of Highland estates



into the hands of Southrons indifferent to the peasant population ; of eviction and expatriation ; of farm added to farm ; of clearance for deer-forests and pasture-land. Letters to newspapers and a constant correspondence with proprietors, factors, farmers, crofters followed, and kept the matter well to the front, increasing his store of material for the book which wound up his public action in the cause.

But Greek pronunciation and the restoration of St Giles' Cathedral gave him relief from his more insistent labours. Dean Stanley sent him playful post-cards on both, writing on February 6, 1880, from Westminster :—

“ In accents sweet  
I fain would greet  
The bold restorer of Hellenic laughter.  
All hail Pall Mall,  
And *Mæ* as well !  
All hail that shall subdue the ‘ Times ’ hereafter.”

On the 27th of the same month came a stanza on St Giles' :—

“ What shall we say when grim St Giles'  
Is beautiful through all his aisles ?  
When now no longer any dread is  
Of ‘ lugs ’ beset by Jenny Geddes.  
Instead of Laud, I find to please  
My weary soul good Cameron Lees.  
Instead of Claverhouse’s rack, I  
Salute the genial convert Blackie.”

The "genial convert" was at Taymouth when this was written, basking in the smiles of great ladies there, and marching up and down the avenue while he meditated o' mornings.

He was due in London to give a lecture at the Royal Institution on the last Friday of April, and left about the 23d to spend a few days with Mr and Mrs Macmillan at Tooting, and to discuss with the former the publication of a revised edition of his old translation of 'Faust.' This recast was not yet completed, but he received hearty encouragement to go on with it. After four days he left Knapdale for Laleham in Clapham Park, where he was much *fêted* by the "wingless angels" to whom he lectured on Greek myths, and in whose albums he wrote wise maxims for their guidance in life. He ended with a sonnet, afterwards included in 'Mensis Vitæ,' and beginning—

Beautiful Laleham ! of most lovely things  
Named with few lovelier, and of things most pure  
With purest ;—

which remains an honoured script in the archives of the school.

His lecture at the Royal Institution was on "Gaelic," and it was warmly received. While he was in Clapham Park he gave up some time to reading the story of the "Clapham Sects," and

visited the sites sacred to its members. Afterwards he went to stay with Mr and Mrs Archer in their new home in Cromwell Place for a week, interrupted by two days at Mentmore with Lord and Lady Rosebery, which latter deserve a word of quotation. He wrote thence on May 3:—

Here I am in the central hall of a wonderful Italian sort of house, or rather palace: all full of pillars and porticoes, and gold and glass, and Venetian velvet and French Gobelins, and clear outlook into the undulant greenery of this soft and luxuriant country. I arrived in time for an eight o'clock dinner; party small and snug, little more than family,—Mr Hayward, the prose translator of 'Faust,' and Mr Dasent, the Norseman, whom all the world knows; conversation full of political anecdotes and English chaff. After dinner the Countess sang "Auld Robin Gray" with great force and taste; another lady was Miss Gladstone, who is a very nice young lady, with all her mother's nature and motherliness breaking out constantly in sweet smiles on her face. I gave her a present of my 'Lays of the Highlands and Islands,' a copy of which I had in my portmanteau, with the simple inscription "To Mary Gladstone." I love her honest face so much. This morning the house has almost wholly swarmed off to the Metropolis, leaving me with the Baby! Sybil, a wonderful production with large blue eyes and serene temper.

Oxford came next, and a supper given by the Scotch students of Balliol, with "plenty of good songs" and applause. "No professor there but Sayce." This redeemed the inanity of his stay,

for he never breathed the academic air as one provided with the academic lungs, and he went off with a glad heart to stay at Birdsall with Lord and Lady Middleton. This visit was an unalloyed refreshment.

The people here are irresistibly nice, the most charming simplicity, grace, and frankness—English culture and Celtic sentiment mingled in the most happy and harmonious way. Besides our hostess, we have Miss Gordon Cumming, as lively as a sunlit waterfall, and flexible in thought and sentiment as a young osier-twigg. The Lady is not only a poem herself but a poetess. In her company you feel as if you were in a flower-garden where all the flowers speak.

A lecture in Sheffield closed the campaign, and he returned to Edinburgh about May 16. He and Mrs Blackie were minded to quit the house in Hill Street, and to seek a brighter and fresher home. But he contemplated the change with a pang of regret. Mrs Blackie was at Wemyss Bay with Mrs D. O. Hill, and he wrote to her on May 17 :—

Here I am in my old house, my old house, small and shabby though it be ; my old house, my old house is just the proper thing for me !

One can imagine how he looked at his book-lined walls, and foreknew the reckless confusion which the transference would make of their perfect orderliness.

He sat to Monsieur Richeton for an etching during these days in Edinburgh, and began to correct the proofs of 'Faust,' submitting them later to Dr Walter C. Smith for revision. Then he went to Altnacraig, but had to return in June for the funeral of his friend and pastor's wife. Another of the inner and beloved circle of friends passed away the same month, the "Little Lady," whose life is still a hallowed memory in Tobermory, Miss Henrietta Bird.

He went back to Altnacraig in time for a visit from Professor (now Sir Archibald) Geikie, greatly enjoyed, as it revived his dormant interest in the advancing science of geology.

During August the writer was a guest at Altnacraig, and has many memories to relate of the visit. Five weeks sped with but three days of rain, and the glory of the West Highlands in that spell of sunshine cannot be forgotten. An Italian visitor, sent by Signor Minghetti, announced one day at lunch that in his forthcoming volume, on the working of the poor law in Great Britain, he meant to recommend the climate of Scotland to his compatriots as more invigorating than that of Italy, and equally sunny. The party listened in a silence compounded of Scottish loyalty and blank surprise.

Early in the month, Mr Patterson of the

'Globe' and Miss Pipe being the other visitors, we went for a three days' excursion to Iona, finding quarters at the Columba Inn, thanks to the kindness of two artists, who generously gave up their bedrooms, and contented themselves with sofas in the parlour. The Professor knew every creek and undulation of the island, and led the explorers, with Adaman's records and the Duke of Argyll's book for further help, while the red Ross of Mull, the dark-blue sea, and the green banks of the sacred spot filled the scene with sunny colour.

About the last week of August Miss Flora Stevenson, the "Shirra," and Professor Robertson Smith joined the circle and enriched its tranquillity with their presence, their talk, and their songs. Perhaps no week of the summer was more interesting than that, when the afternoons were spent in boating, or on the heathery heights; when the sunsets drew all to the seat on the cliff; when the nights were closed with song or psalm, Sheriff Nicolson delighting us ever anew with his own Skye songs, surely the most human ever sung:—

“ Reared in those dwellings have brave ones been ;  
Brave ones are still there.  
Forth from their darkness on Sundays I've seen  
Coming pure linen,  
And like the linen the souls were clean  
Of them that wore it.

See that thou kindly use them, O man !  
 To whom God giveth  
 Stewardship over them, in thy short span,  
 Not for thy pleasure !  
 Woe be to them who choose for a clan  
 Four-footed people !

Blessings be with you both now and aye,  
 Dear human creatures !  
 Yours is the love that no gold can buy,  
 Nor time can wither.  
 Peace be to thee and thy children, O Skye !  
 Dearest of islands !”

And the other, and earlier, which ended :—

“ Pleasant it is to be here,  
 With friends in company,  
 But I would fly to the Isle of Skye  
 To-morrow if I were free !  
 Dunedin is queenly and fair --  
 None feels it more than I---  
 But in the prime of the summer time,  
 Give me the Isle of Skye !”

One Sunday evening, when the flush had faded from the sea and the moon was high, the whole party sat on the cliff in the soft and heather-scented air, while the Sheriff led psalm after psalm,—“The heav’ns God’s glory do declare ;” “The Lord’s my shepherd, I’ll not want ;” “One thing I of the Lord desired ;” “Now Israel may say, and that truly ;” and “All people that on earth do dwell.” Now three of them sing in the

courts above—Alexander Nicolson, Dr Robertson Smith, and the old Professor; but their voices were then already well known in heaven.

When the party broke up in the early days of September, and a remnant of four was left, it fell out one afternoon that Mrs Blackie and the writer, sitting on a garden seat, noted a weary wayfarer with dusty boots open the little gate and climb up the footpath. He wore a soft wide-awake and grey clothes, and displayed no badge of saintship nor lantern of philosophy. "A dominie for Pro.," said Mrs Blackie. The Professor's voice was ringing out from the open window of his turret study, laden with soft Gaelic gutturals. It ceased, and the dominie stood under the porch. A few minutes passed, and Bella came flying to the garden seat. "Please, mum, it's Mr Herbert Spencer in the drawing-room, and the Professor is not to be found." He had closed his book and gone by the back-door to breathe on the "sublime heights" before dinner. Trembling with responsibility, we faced the illustrious visitor, who restored our composure by abusing the Highlands, libelling the innkeepers, and accusing our sex of bribing porters with threepenny-bits, and so compassing every railway disaster ever recorded. With some indignation we flung our gauntlet in the face of the "father of modern philosophy," and it is to



be feared that he fled from such unwonted treatment. "This has been a very stormy interview," he said, and took his leave. And just afterwards, returning from his walk, the Professor missed his visit.

He found secret hoards of white heather on the moors, and brought its sprays home for all. One lovely branch he sent that summer to Mr Gladstone, who was ill, and who enjoyed the gift, and the Gaelic motto, "Hard as the heather and strong as the fir," which went with it.

The second edition of 'Faust' was published about the end of September, and a copy went to the Premier, who wrote from Whitehall on October 9 :—

Of the spirit and power of the rendering I can entertain no doubt: it moves with the force and flow of an original work. . . . I feel the immense, the overmastering power of Goethe; but with such limited knowledge as I have of his work, I am unable to answer the question whether he has or has not been an evil genius of humanity.

The Professor was still engaged on the Land question, and letters from indignant proprietors form part of the many which he received this year. He sent a kind of manifesto on the subject to the 'Scotsman' in November, and utilised the protest and response which it excited.

The year 1881 began with an interesting re-

quest from Professor Váňa of Prague University, to be allowed to translate 'Self-Culture' into the Tsheque language, that it might be added to the borrowed literature of a country whose native literature the Jesuits boasted to have destroyed.

Lectures on "The Covenanters" and on "The Sabbath" as celebrated in Scotland initiated the year's platform crusade. Both were carefully and seriously prepared, and were intended not merely for the platform, but for a book of 'Lay Sermons,' to be published in the autumn. The latter lecture seems to have been delivered in Glasgow, about the middle of January, on a Sunday evening, and under the auspices of the Sunday Society there. It was the ripe conclusion of a train of thought and argument started in Berlin by Neander more than half a century earlier. Its only weakness lies in the fact that while inveighing against the rigid Sabbath-keeping of Scotland, which led to the exaltation of the letter of the fourth commandment and the perversion of its spirit, he omitted to protect his position by full explanation. No man ever more earnestly kept the Sabbath-day holy, but he kept it fresh and happy also: to him the Sabbath was a delight and honourable, not a day for dull and sour demeanour, and unedifying because unreal observance. He brought his

oblation willingly, and indeed joyfully, to the sanctuary. His week-day work was laid aside, and he studied all morning some passage of St Paul's Epistles, or some character in the history of the chosen people, or some time of struggle for the liberty of pure worship. Always practical and impelled to utter his thoughts, this study grew into lecture or book, and his 'Lay Sermons' are part of such results. In the afternoon he went to church, and the rest of the day he spent in kindly, social intercourse, visiting and receiving friends. But his lecture scarcely indicated to the prejudiced that for him the Sabbath was a hallowed day, and it drew upon him a violent onslaught by the Sabbatarian party, and for a time almost cost him his place in the Highland heart. Further afield, too, he was misunderstood, and men with whom he had no sympathy at all congratulated him on his abjuration of the Jewish Sabbath. One Sunday evening in England, when he was supping with Mr and Mrs Grant Allen, a lady expressed her delight that he approved of the Parisian or Viennese Sunday in preference to the solemn British variety. He looked at her with some severity and said, "The Sabbath is holy unto the Lord, and must be so kept." It is interesting to hear, what he did not know himself, that his words rescued her from indifference,

and showed her that God is worshipped by doing His will, not by sour observance.

I wish [wrote Sheriff Nicolson] we had more men combining love of Christianity and of the Covenanters with sufficient courage to protest against the unchristian ideas and practices taught in the name of the Sinless Man, the First of Sabbath-breakers.

Mr Gladstone, writing at the end of the year, says of the 'Lay Sermons':—

Many thanks for your volume. You are most seductive, for on its arrival I have read your Sermon through, of 63 pages, on the Covenanters; and the Appendix, for which I guess that Cameron, Renwick, & Co. would have given you, if they had been on the seat of judgment, a taste of the boot! Me personally you hit hardest when you say (p. 347) that the Homeric deities are "radically elemental gods." I hope that if you are in London after Easter, you will come to breakfast with me in Downing Street at ten on some Thursday, when we will have a pitched battle on this subject; and you may put me in the boot if you beat, or at any rate if you silence me. Notwithstanding this pugnacious note, I am very sensible of your kindness; and I remain, most faithfully yours, W. E. GLADSTONE.

One of the 'Lay Sermons' was naturally devoted to the burning question of "Landlords and Land Laws," and its text was from Isaiah v. 8, "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth." The others were selected from a number which

he had during a long period delivered from time to time in churches and schoolrooms to young men or to mixed congregations. Some of them were given at Free St John's, others at Mr Matheson's, Mr Webster's, and Dr MacGregor's churches. Only a few of the large number were, however, included in the volume, although many of the rest have appeared in 'Good Words' and other popular journals.

An amusing letter in January 1881 recalls the constant confusion between the Professor and his friend Professor Blaikie of the Free Church College :—

Yes [wrote the latter], I spent last autumn in America, and very pleasantly. But, alas! many mistook me for you. I got some cordial hand-shakings for lectures on Atheism and on Culture and the like, but, on the other hand, I lost character for trying to secularise the Sabbath, which all the ungodliness of the States is sufficiently eager to do already. My wife one day overheard the following conversation in church as I appeared in the pulpit. "It's not our Professor?" "Yes, it is Professor Blackie." "But not the distinguished one." Red-headed youths would sometimes come up and thank me for the Celtic Chair. Only yesterday a Celtic woman got a shilling from me and an old umbrella, after buttering me for what I had done for the Highlands. At Philadelphia a scholar called on me to controvert my views on Homer, and thought I was sneaking out of an untenable position when I assured him I was not the man. The thing is beyond putting right. We must grin and bear it.

In March Professor Blackie was far from well. The winter had been exceptionally severe, and the strain of regular and early attendance at the College had produced a series of weakening colds. His condition gave some anxiety to his friends, some of whom urged retirement from the Greek Chair upon him. It was decided that a house in Douglas Crescent should be bought; that after the summer Altnacraig should be let, and that country quarters should be of free election as the time for them came round. There is no doubt that these plans were formed with a view to his eventual retirement.

During April he was making inquiries into such Highland details as the dates of tartans and bagpipes, and was also concerned with the census of Gaelic-speaking districts, which, from a flaw in the schedules, was not expected to give correct statistics. He was one of the Edinburgh Committee for the Carlyle Memorial in May, in which month he and Mrs Blackie went to Altnacraig for their last summer there.

In June he made an exploration of Colonsay, "sacred to St Oran and Lord Colonsay," and in September he went to Pitlochry, where his friends the Archers were summering, and thence made his way to Golspie to see the Duke of Sutherland and inspect his mills at Brora. This flight northwards

had another object—the study of those remarkable products of rigid religiosity and exceptional power called “The Men,” whose habitat is in the northern counties of Scotland, where they wield grim influence, narrowing, depressing, and yet not without dignity and even sacredness. Dr Aird, of the Free Church manse of Creich, helped him to understand their function of seer and public censor combined.

While Professor and Mrs Blackie lingered that autumn at Altnacraig, the transference from Hill Street to 9 Douglas Crescent was effected under the management of Miss Macdonald, — during those years a trusted friend and companion,—so that on their return they stepped into a house already in partial array. The leave-taking of Altnacraig was celebrated by its own appropriate bard, as the home-coming had been by the “Little Lady.” Dr Walter C. Smith, a frequent guest at Altnacraig, sang its *Vale* : —

“Fair within and without,  
     Meet for a sage and poet,  
 With the pine- and birch-clad crags about,  
     And the islanded sea below it ;  
 And behind it a ridgy hill,  
     While a stream leaps down the glen,  
 Where the sleepy beat of a little mill  
     Low pulses now and then.









Some of the most interesting specimens of the English style

of the 18th century



Fair without, but within  
 Is a rarer, loftier beauty,—  
 Womanly grace the heart to win,  
 And patient doing of duty ;  
 And thoughts serene and high,  
 And lore of the ancient days,  
 And gleams of the light that cannot die,  
 And loving homely ways.

Without and within all fair,  
 The form alike and the spirit ;  
 He, blithe and gay as the bird in the air ;  
 She, calm in her modest merit.  
 Greek lightsomeness in him,  
 In her the grave, grand Goth,  
 But wedding together the ages dim  
 By the Christian faith in both.

. . . . .

Farewell ! the sea will beat  
 With white foam on thy shore,  
 And friends will sit on the rose-crowned seat,  
 And talk as we did of yore ;  
 But not such talk as we  
 Beneath the red pines had,—  
 And never again would I like to see  
 The place where I was so glad."

Soon 9 Douglas Crescent began to wear that look which Mrs Blackie's magic touch gave to all things of her home. The view to the Firth and beyond, the sunsets over Corstorphine Hill, the sense of space and the inflow of light, reconciled her husband to the West End ; and two

studies sacred to himself, all lined with his books, —and supplemented by the back drawing-room when he wanted change,—completed its triumph over the old house in Hill Street.

He settled down to work with a sense of perfect seclusion, and started the winter's warfare with a stirring letter to the '*Scotsman*' of October 26 on "Evictions." He was engaged, too, as he had been all summer, with the material of '*Altavona*,' a book which was meant to express all the best experience and conviction which he had collected from his sixteen seasons as a Highlander. The material was in his hands, notes of repeated visits to the islands of the west, where are the memories of clan feuds and clan fealty, of patient missionary settlement and zeal; and notes of constant inspection of every centre of interest on the Celtic mainland, historical, educational, industrial. His occupation was rather with the form which all this garnered reminiscence should take, and he was happy in choosing that of vivacious colloquy between speakers of widely differing types and views, whom he places in the centre of every scene, and associates in every experience. Highlanders, both Catholic and Presbyterian, an Oxonian churchman, and a German philosopher, and casual, local impersonations, exchange impres-

sions, inquiries, and information on all points intimate to the Highlands; but throughout the variety the author's own personality binds the whole into one. This work occupied a year's leisure, and was published in May 1882 by Mr David Douglas.

On January 10 of the same year a dinner, which served as a kind of consecration banquet, was given to the friends made free of the new home. Dr MacGregor, Dr Walter C. Smith, and other kindly-minded divines, were of the number, and the talk ran on the personal devil, to whom the company denied the material privileges of horns, hoofs, and tail, relegating him to the world of undecorated spirits. An old lady present, whose orthodoxy dated from more dogmatic days, held up her hands in shocked remonstrance. "What!" she said, "would you deprive us of the devil?"

Shortly after this house-warming a series of colds lowered the Professor's health, and premature east winds brought on a temporary ailment of the eyes, sufficiently alarming to confine him to bed in the care of nurses and doctors. This illness lasted all February and part of March. He was practically blind during most of this time, and depended upon visitors, his willing secretaries, for all reading and writing.

The daughters of his friend Mr Archer, Miss Macdonald, and the writer took it in turns to minister to these needs, while Mrs Blackie sat by him to nurse and soothe. Dr John Brown still came to see him occasionally, and Dr Bishop supplemented the rarer visits of the "beloved physician." The latter was full of cheer as ever,—cheer for others,—and his calls were the event of the sickroom. The patient brightened up at his voice. "John" and "Hans" they called each other, with the affectionate familiarity of half a century's friendship. "Here I lie, surrounded by beautiful and delightful nurses, John." "Delightful certainly, but not beautiful, Hans," till, catching sight of a lady half-hidden in the bow of a window, the doctor made a dexterous *volte-face*, and murmured wilily, "Beautiful indeed!"

All these weeks of suffering were borne with perfect sweetness, and even gaiety. He never complained; he took every dose and bore every lotion prescribed; and he arranged his hours for business, sleep, and social enjoyment with the same precision that characterised him in health. From eight to nine o'clock in the evening he held a little levee, heard the news of the day, and made his comments. His brother professors came to sit with him, and brought the cream of academic gossip. In the mornings from

ten to twelve he had his letters read and answered, and listened to some newspaper or book chosen by himself. Then came lunch and sleep, and the afternoons were given to repose and meditation.

Mrs Blackie was convinced that his strength was no longer equal to his College work, but the thought of retirement was distasteful to him. His mental energy was so abounding that he could not credit a permanent failure in its bodily equivalent. But Dr Bishop was assured by the character of this illness that another session of daily strain and exposure would undermine the health preserved in equipoise by temperate habit and by method rather than by inherent vigour. He said nothing at the time, fearing to disturb his patient's convalescence by the pain of such an announcement, and reserved his opinion until the summer.

Amongst the incidents of this time testifying to the hold which Professor Blackie had upon the affections of the working classes, was a letter dated 18th February, from the Committee of the Caledonian Railway Company's *employés*, at whose annual entertainment he was wont to preside :—

We forward to you our heartfelt sympathy for you in your present illness, but hope and trust that a merciful



Providence may soon restore you again to health and strength, and that your life may be spared for many years to come in Happiness, Prosperity, and Usefulness. The community at large can badly spare so useful a member of society.

Many other bodies of men shared this sentiment. One day a cabman came up to him. "Will ye shake hands, Professor?" he said; and after the ceremony, "Man, we all love ye." Mrs Blackie called him in fun "the people's John," so constant was the stream of such affectionate homage, and he esteemed it next to the love of his students.

His return to health was celebrated by a meeting of the Hellenic Society towards the end of March. By that time he was able to correct the proofs of 'Altavona,' with alterations in its genealogical matter made by Mr Skene, and in its geology by Professor Geikie. This work took up the leisure of about six weeks, and by the beginning of May he was busy with a lecture on Greek pronunciation and accent for Oxford.

On May 5 he attended his colleague Professor Cossar Ewart's inaugural lecture for the summer session. The subject was "Evolution," and the lecturer a staunch Darwinian. After the discourse the Professor asked him, "Do you preach evolution with God, or without God?" "With

God, of course," replied the lecturer. "Then," said the Professor, "I have no objection to evolution. Let it go as far as it pleases; it is only another name for growth, which is the continual miraculous manifestation of divine plastic force and reasonable will of the universe."

A letter to Mrs Blackie on May 7 answers her entreaty for some modification of the indictments in 'Altavona.' "O Mrs Oke! Mrs Oke! fair words and fine fancies, dainty conceits and delicate nerves, never pulled one tooth from the devil's jaw!"

Mrs Blackie was now at Wemyss Bay Hydro-pathic with Mrs D. O. Hill. He started for London on May 8; had a lively journey, during which he read 100 pages of Howells' 'Foregone Conclusion,' and composed a "May Song." His bourne was Mr Archer's house, but after three days he betook himself to Oxford, where his lecture came off on the 12th, in the great hall of the museum, to an audience of "all sorts and degrees, not without a fair sprinkling of ladies." The Master of Balliol was there, and in an unlucky moment the Professor bethought him of his name as an excellent illustration: "We do not say Jowétt, but Jówett." This innocent personality cost him the continued presence of the illustrious but sensitive don.

The people here [he wrote] are difficult to move—even in the best case wearing on their shoulders the head of a god, but having their right arm paralysed, so that their thought fails to leap into action. However, it is always good to speak the truth on the house-tops.

The sad news of Dr John Brown's death came to him on the day of this lecture. "I say nothing," he commented, "but call this the year of warning and of preparation. While we live, let us live like men."

And here a word may be interpolated upon his attitude towards loss by death. It was sometimes said that he did not feel the death of his friends. No more undiscerning criticism was ever ventured. It is true that he put the thought of loss resolutely aside, but it was because of excess, not lack, of feeling. He was unmanned when he gave way to sorrow, and the old melancholy which had undermined the energies of his youth threatened to invade the vigour of his maturity and old age unless resisted with all the might of his philosophy. Once asked why he cared so seldom to return to Aberdeen he replied, "It is a city of dead friends—I dare not go back." And when the comrades of his lifetime died he could not speak of them, but he seemed to grow thinner and frailer for a while until their memory had taken

on the radiance of the eternal hope. When the young and promising passed away he grieved with less reserve, for he never quite lost his early bewilderment at the purpose patiently prepared but unfulfilled in mortal development. His sonnet on the death of Frederick Hallard illustrates this:—

Oh, name him not, nor all the shadowy host  
Of lovely dead, whose memory haunts my soul !  
Be they as bright now as the starry pole,  
For me they are not, and to me is lost  
The presence of their beauty evermore !  
He was a youth whom to behold was joy,  
Dowered with all grace of the fresh-hearted boy,  
Pure as white light, and on his face he wore  
A wealth of smiles to greet all kindred life.  
Erect he grew, and light-plumed, like a flower,  
More flushing-fair from fragrant hour to hour,  
Till when there came a cruel, cruel knife  
And lopped his pride. I turn my face away :  
Tears bring no help : I can but work and pray.

From Oxford he returned to London, to be received into its vortex of spring distractions.

I am just returned from breakfasting with *W. E. G.* [he wrote on May 18]. The party was small, select, and various : Lord Houghton just returned from Egypt ; Miss Swanwick, translator of *Æschylus*, second to Blackie!!! Toole the comedian ; Mr Knowles, the editor of the ‘*Nineteenth Century*’ ; and a Mr Roden Noël, a poet. The Minister was bright and eloquent, not at all like a bound man ; the conversation animated—on Goethe,

Carlyle, German Literature, the Thames Tunnel, Walter Scott, Wedgwood china, &c., &c. On parting, Gladstone made me a present of a Greek biography of himself, on which I caused him to write his name as a memorial.

Mr Toole has given us a delightful comment on this occasion in his 'Reminiscences,' where he tells us that the conversation was on such high matters that he was glad to chum up with a policeman on his way home, to bring himself back to the common key of life.

The Professor enjoyed his fortnight of town to the full, and then went to Painswick near Stroud to stay with Mrs Dobell. Here he wrote on May 26—

I am debating seriously with myself whether I should not stay here till you come south and fetch me back forcibly. I was reading in Nicolson's 'Gaelic Proverbs' to-day that three things will have their own way—a hen, a pig, and a woman!!! When my private letters are published! your character will appear in its true light; and the gross slander to which I am now daily exposed of deserting my poor wife! will appear in all its horrid invention!!

He went to Stratford-on-Avon a few days later, and then to Coventry, whence he returned to Mrs Blackie, now established in summer quarters at Pitlochry.

'Altavona,' dedicated to Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch, greeted his return, and its

appearance involved him in much correspondence, some of which was controversial, as the matters treated in its lively chapters touched many a sensitive place. But the numberless letters did not prevent him from making his customary appearance at the July banquet in Inverness, where, we are told, he was "very fluent, energetic, and dramatic."

On returning to Pitlochry he received a letter from Dr Bishop, advising him to retire from the Greek Chair. This was written entirely on Dr Bishop's own responsibility, without consulting Mrs Blackie. The letter is dated July 17, 1882, and opens :—

Though I know that you do not approve of my tendering unasked advice, you must kindly allow me to make an exception in your case. I felt more than a year ago that it would be best for you to decide to resign the Chair which you have adorned for so many years. My feeling was deepened by the experiences of last winter, and has been confirmed by your satisfactory progress since the cares of the session have been left behind. You admit yourself quite frankly that you feel the effects of age in your limbs and in various ways. You speak of preparing for the close. Now, so far as fixed public duties and work in crowded rooms, looking over examination papers, &c., I think that you should decide that the end has come. I feel assured that if you do so decide, you will be taking a step better calculated than any other to give you a renewed lease of life, of usefulness, and of rational

pleasure. When freed from class burdens your strength will not be overtaxed. If you feel tired, you will rest; if you feel the need of fresh air, you will seek it; if you feel fit for literary work, you will be able to go on with it without compulsion or overstrain, so injurious to one of your age and strength. I should be grieved if you allowed my recommendation to depress or sadden you, and still I should wish to write with sufficient gravity and urgency to lead you to decide in accordance with my suggestion.

This letter must have pained him, and it is characteristic of his alert judgment and essential reasonableness that he accepted its advice without demur, and a few days later sent in his resignation to the University Court. "I was delighted," wrote Dr Bishop to Mrs Blackie, "when his manly reply came, so full of wisdom and promptitude." This business, amongst others, took him to Edinburgh for the last week of July. A new edition of 'Altavona' was already called for; but Mr Douglas desired to pass the book into the hands of a London firm, and Messrs Chapman & Hall undertook the issue. In the Highlands 'Altavona' had an immediate success. A touching recompense for his championship of the poor came from Skye, where the women spun and dyed the wool which was woven into a plaid for his acceptance, reaching him at Pitlochry just before he left for Edinburgh.

He received many a proof of goodwill from his

colleagues of the *Senatus Academicus*. Early in August 1882 his resignation was in the newspapers, and from all parts of the kingdom came letters of sincere regret from his students, new and old.

You can look back with thankfulness and gladness [wrote Professor Calderwood] on the work accomplished; may God give you strength for much good work in years to come, and cheer you with the joyous prospect of an eternity for serving Him.

To very many of your old students [wrote one of them] it will be a genuine sorrow to think that you have finally left the Greek class-room, for, to judge from my own experience, it was from that platform that they were first taught to take a free, tolerant, generous view of life. Charles Lowe, the Berlin correspondent of the 'Times,' spent an evening with me last week, and first told me of your retiral. And the greatest pleasure of our meeting was the memories we were able to conjure from hours spent under the gracious influence of your genius and teaching.

It was not till October 23 that a meeting of the *Senatus Academicus* confirmed the retirement in the following terms:—

At this their first meeting since the acceptance by her Majesty the Queen of Professor Blackie's resignation, the *Senatus Academicus* resolve to express to Professor Blackie their regret that he, though one of their oldest Professors, should now be obliged by failing health to retire from the Chair of Greek in this University, which



he has held with much distinction for thirty years. During that time, by his numerous and brilliant performances in various branches of literature, and by the part which he has played in the social and public life of Scotland, he has won for himself a wide renown, which has been reflected upon the University. The Senatus must specially call to mind on the present occasion the remarkable feat performed by Professor Blackie in collecting subscriptions through the country, which have amounted to a sum sufficient for a handsome endowment of a Chair of the Celtic Languages and Literature. Perhaps no other man but Professor Blackie could have succeeded in exciting sufficient enthusiasm in the cause to produce such a result. The Senatus record their thanks to Professor Blackie for the service thus rendered to the University, and for the legacy which he has left to them in the shape of the Celtic Chair, of which during his lifetime he will continue to be a patron.

Two-thirds of the endowment of the Greek Chair fell to his portion as retiring pension, and this probably amounted to about one-third of its average income.

Sir Daniel Wilson, who had so strenuously helped him to win the Chair, wrote on August 17 :—

Your resignation seems an event in which I may claim a special interest, while it reminds me how time has run since those old days when I little dreamt of wandering away to spend the best years of my life beyond the Atlantic. Let me congratulate you as one who, in laying down his armour, has the right to some honest boasting.

Professor Charteris wrote on September 8 :—

I have not only honoured the scholar, but I have appreciated the Christian man, whose influence at the threshold of the student's university life has been so strong and so good. And for all you have done so long to form scholars, who should be men and not pedants, I am one of many to offer you thanks.

The summer ended with two Highland raids, reaching as far north as the Ross-shire lakes and Skye, and including his annual visit to Mull ; and he returned to Edinburgh about the middle of October, to begin a final stage of twelve years' unfettered activity.

But first his interest was required not alone for the large question of University Reform, to which he reverted with vigour, but for the local detail of his successor in the Greek Chair. The various candidates were sending in their applications, and some of them naturally sought to engage his influence. There can be little doubt that he would have liked to see his valued friend Dr Donaldson appointed ; but when the suffrages declared for Mr Butcher, no man came forward with more cordial welcome of his young and distinguished successor than the old Professor, in spite of his regret that a Scottish scholar had not been chosen.

Another election was of equal interest, that of

the first occupant of the Celtic Chair, to which Professor Donald Mackinnon was appointed on December 22, 1882. Professor Mackinnon has contributed a statement with regard to the Chair and his appointment so valuable that its due is full quotation as a summary and completion of the subject:—

It is difficult to say with whom the idea of founding a Celtic Chair in Scotland originated. With the Gaelic-speaking people it has been a dream for many a long day, or rather night, and it found expression among them in speech and song on many occasions. Sir Walter Scott, it is understood, was much in favour of the scientific study of the Celtic tongues in our Universities. In the year 1831 an article appeared in the ‘Quarterly Review,’ written, it is believed, by the editor, but inspired by Sir Walter Scott, reviewing a volume of Gaelic Poems published some eighteen months previously. The writer—after expressing his surprise that no Chair of Welsh existed in the English Universities, nor of Irish in Ireland—added: “But considering the enthusiastic interest which the Scotch have ever taken in the old monuments of their national existence, and the abundance of their academic apparatus for all purposes, even that (*viz.*, the absence of an Irish or Welsh endowment) does not surprise us so much as the absence of any Gaelic endowment among their four Universities. Surely the numberless Highland and Celtic Clubs, of whose proceedings for the improvement of black cattle and the encouragement of the philabeg the newspapers are continually reminding us, might do well to set apart a tithe at least of their annual funds for an object of such unquestionable im-

portance." About the year 1853 the late Rev. Dr M'Lauchlan, who had been settled in Edinburgh as minister of the Gaelic congregation of the Free Church a few years previously, began to teach a Gaelic class in the New College, Edinburgh. The class was taught, as a rule, every alternate session until 1880. It was primarily intended and adapted for students studying with a view to the ministry in the Highlands of Scotland, but it was open to all. I attended it myself during session 1871-72. The late Rev. Dr Cameron of Brodick taught a class on similar lines for several sessions in the Free Church College, afterwards in the University, of Glasgow. A class of the same description is, I believe, being taught at present in the Free Church College, Glasgow, by the Rev. Wm. Ross. These classes were taught during the winter months for one or two days in each week. They were open to all students free of charge. I am informed that many years ago the late Sir William Mackinnon was prepared to give a large sum of money (£5000) as an endowment for this purpose. This munificent offer was somehow not taken advantage of, and Sir William, I am told, gave the money, or a portion of it, to the late Dr Duff to be used in promoting his Indian Missions.

Within the University of Edinburgh the movement which ended in the establishment of the Celtic Chair originated with a motion in the General Council of the University on the 19th April 1870. It was moved by Sheriff Nicolson, seconded by Professor Blackie, and carried unanimously—"That it is desirable that there should be a Chair of Celtic Literature and Antiquities in the University, and that it be remitted to a Committee to consider and report upon the subject." The Committee appointed at the meeting were Lord Neaves;

Principal Sir Alexander Grant; Professors Blackie and Masson; Professor Macgregor, New College; Mr Taylor Innes, Advocate; Rev. Dr Cameron; Archibald M'Neill, W.S.; Sheriff Nicolson; and myself. Other members were added from time to time, among the more prominent of whom were Lord Colonsay; Lord Gordon; Cluny Macpherson of Cluny; Sir John M'Neill; E. Chisholm-Batten; Sheriff Clark of Ulva; Sir Archibald Geikie; Professor Campbell Fraser; Professor Macpherson; and Donald Beith, W.S.

Principal Sir Alexander Grant was the first Convener of the Committee. A representation was made to the University Court to take steps for the carrying out of the resolution of the General Council. The Court replied that it had no power to promote the object contemplated, which, it was added, "seems to depend for its being carried out on private munificence." This was reported to the General Council in October 1871, when Principal Grant resigned the convenership, and Professor Macgregor of the New College, Edinburgh, was appointed. The Committee under the new Convener forthwith prepared an elaborate statement advocating the claims of the Chair, and appealing for subscriptions. The endowment considered necessary was £10,000. This is, I believe, the only authoritative statement ever issued by the Committee. Several thousand copies were sent to noblemen, gentlemen, societies, and associations in Great Britain and Ireland, America, India, Australia, New Zealand, and elsewhere. The result was disappointing. The Royal Celtic Society of Edinburgh promised a handsome subscription. During the winter of 1872-73 a *conversazione* was held in Edinburgh under the auspices of the Highland County Associations in the city, Lord

Colonsay presiding. The proceeds of this gathering, which amounted to only a few pounds, were handed over to the Committee; and this was practically all the money gathered during the convenership of Professor Macgregor.

It was in April 1874 that Professor Blackie became Convener. Among the very first to offer him support was Mr John Mackay, now of Hereford, who guaranteed 100 guineas from the Clan Mackay. Professor Blackie issued his appeal for subscriptions from Altnacraig, Oban, in the form of a letter addressed "To the Members of the Northern Meeting," Inverness. The letter is dated September 12, 1874. Professor Blackie suggested that through the agency of associations and clubs £6000 might be raised, while £4000 might be looked for from private subscriptions. He added that he himself was prepared to give £50.

The response to this appeal was most satisfactory. Subscriptions poured in from all quarters and from all classes—from the Queen's £200 to the shillings and half-crowns contributed by Highland artisans and servant-maids throughout the whole of the British Empire and America. During the three years following, the exertions of Professor Blackie in promoting this cause were almost incredible. He hardly rested night or day. There was an occasional meeting of the committee to agree to a report, but henceforward Professor Blackie was himself committee and convener in one. In April 1875 he was able to report that £4600 were subscribed. This sum was almost doubled within the next twelve months. In April 1877 the subscriptions amounted to over £10,000, when the Professor asked for power to raise the limit to £12,000. In October 1878 he was able to report that the amount subscribed was within £300 of this sum, and he

was authorised meantime to prepare the constitution of the Chair with the view to the election of a Professor. During the next two or three years he recommended from time to time that the appointment of a Professor be postponed and the funds allowed to accumulate. In April 1882 he reported that the endowment now amounted to within a fraction of £14,000, and had been handed over to the Senatus to constitute the Chair; and in October he reported as follows: "I crave liberty to state for the information of all concerned that the Celtic Chair is now in the hands of the University, and that I understand a meeting of the Curators will forthwith take place for proceeding to elect a Professor with the customary intimations."

The Committee was thereupon discharged. Professor Blackie was repeatedly thanked by the General Council, and it was resolved that during his lifetime he should be associated with the Curators in the patronage of the Chair. It was freely acknowledged by all who took an interest in this work that Professor Blackie was the only man living able to collect this endowment, which now amounts to £14,300.

The appointment of a Professor was made on December 22, 1882. The appointment was, I believe, unanimous, and it had, I understood, the cordial support of Professor Blackie. I did not enter upon my duties until the beginning of the following session. On the 7th November 1883, at a banquet and presentation in connection with the first appointment of a Celtic Professor, Professor Blackie was present, and replied in a hearty speech to the toast of "The Celtic Chair and Professor Blackie"; and on Friday the 9th November he was present with members of the Senatus and University, when my inaugural lecture was delivered.

Professor Blackie laid aside £50 to be given as a prize in the class during the first two sessions of its existence. He ever showed the heartiest interest in our work, visiting the class-rooms from time to time. He was with us frequently at the closing day of the session, and was almost invariably present at the opening lecture each year. We shall not, alas! see his picturesque figure nor hear his kindly voice again.—*A dhuid de Phàras dha!*

DON. MACKINNON.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## CLASS-ROOM AND PLATFORM.

1841-1882.

THE foregoing chapters have been written in vain if the reader, personally unacquainted with Professor Blackie, has not by this time realised what manner of man he was. But there are aspects of his public life and conversation to which justice can only be done by giving them the necessary emphasis with a multitude of small touches. An attempt to vivify his portrait in this way may therefore be made in a chapter set apart for the purpose.

Blackie at home and Blackie abroad differed considerably. He was a compound of two individualities both wholesome and good, but not the same in manifestation. At home he was gentle, considerate, methodical, serious; only at table

relaxing into discursive talk and occasional explosiveness. His domestic pleasantries were tranquil, and took the form of genial banter and of equally genial irony. To the latter kind belonged the continued narration of the married life and adventures of Mr Bob Melliss. He was a mythical schoolfellow, gifted and amiable. In an evil hour, allured by her rank and pretensions, he had married the Lady Letitia Lambert. This stately personage belonged to the school of "white-satin-shoe philosophers." Her dainty nerves endured no breath from the plebeian world, but required an environment of patrician and ceremonious elegance. The easy-going Bob had to surrender every friend and every habit of his bachelor days, and became a model husband for this lofty and sensitive dame. He forgot the very meaning of liberty, ate and drank as her stern glance directed, spoke and kept silence at her command. He was not unhappy,—far from it,—but he was a slave, a well-dressed appendage to the Lady Letitia's train. This sorry spectacle was constantly held up for compassion. No wife ever honoured her husband's freedom of action more than did Mrs Blackie, but even she at times begged for small concessions to conventionality, which he granted willingly, but which became inevitably the theme of some new episode in the fabled disfranchise-

ment of Bob Melliss. We knew what was coming when he shook his head and muttered, "Poor Bob Melliss."

Another home freak was the production at dinner of a four-lined stanza addressed to "Mrs Oke." Its genesis was always reputed to be as follows: "A very curious thing happened to-day, my dear: as I came round the corner, a young man, who seemed to be hanging about the Crescent, rushed up to me in a state of great agitation and thrust a piece of paper into my hand: I asked him what he meant, but he was gone before I could finish." And then he read the lines:—

Is Okum with you? Oh that stately dame,  
Who walks the earth in such majestic frame;  
Whose glance, like Juno's, casts on all its spell,  
And who in soups and puddings doth excel!

That is one variant of the daily compliment. The agitated young man sometimes thrust a handful of papers upon him, in which case all guests were duly commemorated.

As Professor, as lecturer, and as diner-out, he displayed characteristics which laid him open to the charge of eccentricity. These were the excess of naturalness, of *bonhomie*, of the laughter-loving, jocund, piquant, quick-witted humanity which contact with others excited into ebullition.

In the class-room these humours were often pro-

voked by kindred qualities in the students, and many stories are afloat—taking to themselves a certain Protean contour—of their manifestation. The most celebrated of these may be told in the words of Surgeon-Major Grant Macpherson, a student at the time and eyewitness:—

On a pillar of the colonnade outside his lecture-room he had pasted up one day a notice to say that he would be "unable to meet his classes" that afternoon. It was not long before the *c* had been scratched out. Shortly afterwards, singing as usual, the Professor came across the quadrangle from the Senate-room, and promptly scored out the *l* also. Then with characteristic gesture, tossing his white hair and Scotch plaid over his shoulder, he walked jauntily away, trolling his favourite song, "Green grow the rushes, O!"

This story first appeared in the 'Strand Magazine,' and Mr Harry How received about a dozen letters afterwards, the writer of each claiming to be the man who scratched out the *c*.

Sharp tussles occurred from time to time between the Professor and some dour Scot who disliked being made conspicuous, but the most sensitive relaxed in the end, under the spell of his sunny masterfulness. A new name in the class gave rise to a sometimes puzzled monologue on its derivation. A certain John Crawford was subjected to an inquisition on the subject of his name, which, yielding little, all the Crawfords in

the class—about half-a-dozen—had to stand up, and were bidden produce an essay on the name by the next day. The new student was wag enough to compose the following:—

In bygone and distant days bridges were as scarce as names, so the aboriginal tribes of our country, when under the necessity of crossing rivers and streams, had to mind their feet and keep a look-out for the depths and shallows of the water. But my ancestors soared above such effeminate considerations, and forded the water as the crow flew over it. Therefore, Craw-ford.

This alert audacity delighted the Professor. Students called Bell would be told that no doubt they were so named from the ancestral beauty of the family founder, a joke cheered to the echo when the immediate Bell chanced to be plain.

We are told by an old student that Professor Blackie would walk into his class-room, lift up his hands, and offer the Lord's Prayer in Greek. Then he would speak his mind in English on some notable event, exacting from the students a repetition or free rendering of the matter in Greek. This would be analysed and corrected and committed to memory. The exercise accumulated a repertory of flexible words and phrases for those who made use of it. Then the reading commenced. All that was noblest in human interest and *finest* in the larger scholarship was noted

with learned commentary and quotations ; but he resented losing time over small grammatical pedantries, and over minute accuracies in the rendering of obscure passages. When a difficulty had to be faced, he would pause and go over the passage himself, and would either conquer it or decide that it might be skipped, as the notes respecting it were too verbose.

He leant for help on the few best students, when the others were impenetrably stupid. One of his best men, some time in the seventies, was an Irishman called Geoghegan, a word which the Professor decided should be pronounced *Gawan*. This gentleman came constantly to the assistance of the duller sort, but resented the liberty taken with his name, which he pronounced *Gaigan*. One day when called upon to read, he kept silence. "Gawan," repeated the Professor without response. "Gaigan, you dour deevil, will you read?" he cried, and Geoghegan leapt to his feet with alacrity. On another occasion Geoghegan decided that he was asked to do too much, and answered that he was "unprepared." The Professor gazed at him reproachfully and said, "O, Geoghegan, I never expected this of you."

A student reading with the book in his left hand was called to order and bidden hold it in the other. He coloured and continued to read as

before. The Professor was annoyed, and reprimanded him sharply. The class hissed at this, and the student held up the stump which was all that remained of his right arm. Then Blackie stepped down from his desk, and taking the young fellow in his arms, begged his pardon with tears in his eyes, and turning to the rest, he said, "I am glad that I have gentlemen to teach," and went back to his desk in an outburst of applause. The men loved him, and if the more riotous spirits took advantage of his sympathetic boyishness, and sometimes turned order into rout, even the most ungovernable amongst them acknowledged at heart his patience and tolerance and indomitable pluck and manliness.

Once in winter, when a crowd of students filled the quadrangle and were indulging in a free fight with snowballs, he passed through them with the swinging stride peculiar to him. A snowball struck him as he mounted the steps; he turned at once, flung aside his plaid, and doffed his wide-awake. "Fire away!" he cried, but the snowballs fell from the hands of the shamefast lads.

It is true that the talk in class hours was apt to diverge from Greek during the last years of his College duties. His mind, running on Gaelic, on the Celtic Chair, on the crofters, on Goethe, on John Knox, on the Apostle Paul, would sud-

denly revolt at the overtrodden track of grammatical precision, and rush for a space with reinvigorating eagerness down some tempting vista. We are told that a student whose head reminded him of Byron was the occasion of an eloquent lecture on the genius, misfortunes, temptations, and mistakes of that great poet; while a mere hint would cause to bubble up and sparkle forth a whole volume of wisdom out of his own experience, and out of the resources which he had stored from Goethe, Aristotle, and St Paul.

But he was really saturated with Greek thought, and fully familiar with Greek stand-points and the Greek spirit. He knew Hellas as well ~~as~~ he knew Scotland, and his aim was to inspire his students with enthusiasm for all that was great in Hellenism, and to imbue their minds with the lessons of its histories, its philosophies, its literature, its examples,—with all that made for reverence, for endurance, for culture, for self-control in its drama and national life,—with what, in short, was worthy of their inheritance from Greek humanity. For he was essentially practical, and taught men how to live. It was from Germany that he had learnt his method. He was a German Professor, in closest touch with the students, as the material from which men were to be matured, and it was to their future



worth as men that he mainly looked. He felt himself in this whole-hearted way responsible for the impulse which young minds might at a touch receive, and it can be affirmed that never in his most extravagant moments, when in a manner let loose on the stream of random thought and utterance, did he lose sight of the great seriousness of life, and of its dependence upon God.

He identified himself with the students in a thousand ways, calling on those whom sickness kept from the class; saving some from ruin by his wise interference; supplementing the work of many by instruction at home; assisting the poorer with books given or lent; watching the development of the more hopeful with solicitude; understanding all except the irredeemably shallow; patiently bearing foolishness, boisterousness, even horseplay, as one who knew that boys must learn to be men through experience of the futility of ignorance and presumption.

He was present whenever it was possible at their gatherings,—often the only Professor there,—and his arrival was the occasion of acclamation. He dedicated books to them,—‘*Musa Burschicosa*’ and ‘*Messis Vitæ*’; he supported their magazine, and constantly contributed song, sonnet, or paper to its pages. He secured the co-operation of Sir Herbert Oakeley in the arrange-

ment of Scottish songs to be sung at their concerts; he helped forward the production of a 'Book of Student Songs' for the Scottish Universities, and wrote its introduction. He was one with them, as he had found the professors at Göttingen and Berlin to be; and this beautiful relation outlasted his retirement and characterised him to the end. His reward was great, for the students loved him. No torchlight procession was complete that did not wind up at Blackie's door; and when he appeared at lecture or theatre, he was received as a king might be amongst them, going to his cab at the close between two ranks of cheering youths.

Countless letters testify to the affection of individuals amongst them, to gratitude for salvation, for inspiration, for material help. They cannot be quoted,—they would add volumes to this work. But some from those who, students first and friends afterwards, were acquainted with him both in public and in private, throw sufficient light upon his value as a teacher to be indispensable to this attempt at computation.

I was his assistant [writes the Rev. George Paulin] some thirty-five years back, and spent one or two evenings a-week at his house, examining the class exercises and partaking of tea, and my recollections of these delightful evenings are very vivid.

He was the pleasantest of men to work with [writes Dr James Steele of Florence], as his class-assistants will bear me out in testifying; he spared them all the trouble he could in that most irksome part of the duties they shared with him—that of correcting and appraising the class exercises and examination papers. Far on into the night, with weary brain and aching eyes, we have gone through the monotonous grind together, and all the while his cheery jest and indomitable vivacity would keep us in heart and head to the end. Then would come in the supper-tray, over which he would troll out at intervals a couplet from Homer.

A letter from Professor Cowan, Aberdeen University, is full of point with regard to his professorial work in the sessions 1859 to 1862:—

The Professor was both popular among and respected by his students—the few exceptions being those whose sense of humour was defective, or who confounded the efficiency of a professor with that of a schoolmaster. Blackie didn't profess to drill boys, but to guide the studies of young men, and to inspire them with a love of the Greek language and literature. Students who did not care for Greek, and wouldn't work, managed, I dare-say, to "get through" his classes without much affliction. Students who *did* like Greek received both stimulus and direction in a high degree; and for not a few who, like myself, entered his junior class without much love of the subject, his brightness awakened interest and his enthusiasm became an inspiration. A notable feature of his junior class was what some of us called his "leading article." He commenced proceedings by "delivering his soul" in English upon some topic of the day—academic,

civic, national, social, or religious—and thereafter called up a couple of students to turn the deliverance with his help into Greek. It was an excellent Greek exercise, but it was more; it gave us lads fresh ideas and stimulated our own thought about what was going on in the world. In his class-work he was accustomed rather to read a good deal than to examine passages microscopically, although when a disputed point of importance emerged, he went into the matter thoroughly. When translating Homer, he liked to draw attention to the bard's simple piety. A Greek Professor in his prelections cannot avoid occasionally coming across passages suggestive of things not "of good report." Blackie, whose modesty was genuine, not prudish, hastened over such passages paraphrastically. I shall never forget his words to me after my return from a summer session in Germany. Before he asked me about lectures or anything academical, he said, quite quietly, but seriously and, as I felt, searchingly, "I hope you learned no bad habits when you were away." I have a dim recollection of Blackie's breakfasts. Like most other professorial breakfasts, they were probably a little heavy. No man is himself socially on a cold winter's morning at nine o'clock. But the Blackie suppers, to which I think he invited only those who took some position in the classes, were socially joyous and intellectually stimulating. Toasts, speeches, and songs were the order of the night, and what bulked least was the drinking; not, of course, through any artificial restriction, but simply because the flow of soul detracted from the flow of negus. Any student who introduced into his speech a graceful classical allusion to "Juno" (Mrs Blackie) met with special appreciation.

Endorsing what Professor Cowan says of his

“genuine modesty,” some sentences may be quoted from a letter written to Dr Walter C. Smith by Blackie’s oldest living friend, Sir Theodore Martin, on March 9, 1895 :—

Since 1835 Blackie and I have been friends. I knew him in his early days in Edinburgh as I believe nobody knew him. Though there was a difference of eight years between us, he was to me like an elder brother, and his heart was as open to me as if I had been a woman. It was impossible not to love him—not only for his fiery energy and determination to work out for good whatever power God had given him, but for the truly original purity of his nature. He was in truth the most purely-minded young man I ever met—an Israelite without guile,—and I have no doubt many of the best impulses of my nature are due to his influence upon me in those far-away days. Though we met in later years but rarely, the affection then cemented between us never relaxed, widely though we often differed in our views on social and political questions.

The Rev. Dr Farquharson of Selkirk writes :—

The Professor held a deep place in the affections of his old students, and many of us felt that we owed him much. I entered his class in Aberdeen—a very young student—in session 1846-47. That is only one year short of half a century ago; but while the words and teaching of most of the Professors of that day are but confused sounds to me now, I vividly remember his sayings and manner, and living forceful personality. The intellectual impulse I received from him I regard as one of the most precious portions of my education. I shall ever cherish with gratitude and affection the memory of those early

days; and youthful feelings of attachment grew into deep admiration and respect as for a true-souled man, when in maturer years I was brought in contact with him.

A still older friend, Dr Forbes White, supplies an interesting testimony to his work at Aberdeen :—

My first introduction to Professor Blackie took place in the session of 1843-44, at Marischal College, Aberdeen. We entered college in those days at an early age, and were surprised and delighted by the exuberance of spirit of our new Professor. Except on the recognised days of prize-giving and on the eve of holidays, good order was maintained, though by the influence of love rather than of fear. Jokes came not unfrequently, and witty, wise sayings; yet excellent work was done, though on lines new to us. Looking at a drawing of the Apollo Belvidere or the Discobolus on the walls, he would describe it and its history in free, flowing Latin, and gradually encourage us to stand up in the class and declaim, first more or less on his own lines, and afterwards by giving us another statue to be described in our own words, correcting errors at the close. With what pleasure we heard him in the afternoon hour translating book after book of the ‘Æneid,’ with philological and historical explanations and references to Milton, Goethe, and Dante! All this, along with the regular class-work, formed a part of his written weekly examination by a method which I believe he was the first to introduce. Thirty questions were dictated verbally, one after the other. A couple of minutes was allowed for the student to write the short reply to each question on a folio sheet. The papers were then exchanged among the students; the Professor gave the correct replies, the number

of errors was added up, and the order of merit announced before the close of the meeting. All this showed a systematised method of work with which Blackie is not usually credited. Again, with what unerring skill he discovered the student who was translating honestly, and distinguished him from one relying on a crib; and with what pleasure he detected any vein of poetry in the style of another. Indolence and carelessness he passed by with a word or two more stinging than a severe reproof. Encouragement and the gift of his friendship were the secrets of his power among us. To be invited to his house on the Saturday evenings for private reading in some less known Latin author was the best reward of all. On these occasions he treated us as if we were his sons or younger brothers. After work came the light supper and the feast of intellectual good things—first-fruits of those evenings which in later times he was to make famous in the Hellenic Societies of Aberdeen and Edinburgh. Thus he got to know the tastes and pursuits of different students, and became their wise adviser—pouring out stores from his Italian travel, his studentship at German Universities, and his intercourse with great and good men—a living centre of quickening influence.”

Mr Burness, a friend of thirty years’ standing, and a well-known member of the Edinburgh Hellenic Society, sends a spirited contribution, which may fitly conclude these personal reminiscences:—

I have a vivid recollection of the day on which I became acquainted with Professor Blackie. It was a day memorable in the life of every boy—that on which he exchanges the boyish jacket for the manly coat. Like many other country boys, I had left the provincial school

with small Latin and less Greek, and come to attend the University. There was then no entrance examination, but each boy went separately into the Professor's private room and was asked to read a verse or two of St John's Gospel in Greek. The result was generally such as to satisfy the good-natured Professor, and it was so in my case. But when the lad happened to come from the wilds of some Highland parish, and was hopelessly at sea, he was sent to a tutorial class for a month or two, after which he was allowed to warstle through. I little dreamt that that short interview was to be the beginning of a life-long friendship, and that after long years I should mourn for the dead Professor as for one of my dearest friends.

There were then three Greek classes. The first was composed chiefly of boys, but with a sprinkling of men older even than any in the senior classes. These were either altogether self-taught or had been kept back by difficulties of various kinds. The junior was certainly the class in which the Professor was seen to most advantage, and in which the salient features of his character were most conspicuous. He good-naturedly ridiculed his being called on to teach such a class. It was, he said, like employing a 500 horse-power engine to pick up a pin. But then, he added, it was the system he complained of, not the boys. "Oh no, my heart yearns over the boys——" but the remainder was lost in a deafening *thorubos*, and the Professor's eyes were seen to be moist. The fact is, he revelled in his junior class. It was the safety-valve for all his latent fun and animal spirits. Some of the sentences he gave us to turn into Greek still remain in my memory:—

"Now I know for certain that the British spring-time has arrived; for the wind cuts me like a knife, and the frost hangs in icicles from my beard."



"Some believe in ten Homers, I in one. Nature is not so prodigal of her great poets."

His kindness to the young fellows was beyond description. How often he warned us all against overwork and the night-lamp, reminding us that we were only growing lads. Many of the students were strangers in Edinburgh, and, friendless but for him, led lives lonely enough. He invited them in relays to breakfast at his house in Castle Street, where he and his accomplished wife dispensed a genial hospitality. If any student were ill, he missed him at once, and went to his lodgings to inquire for him. In a thousand ways he endeared himself to them all, and this was the secret of his success. There may be a difference of opinion as to his powers as a teacher, but he certainly kindled the enthusiasm for Greek culture which led his students to teach themselves.

At the end of the session the Professor delivered to his class a valedictory address in rhyme. The only couplet I now remember, and of which the Professor delighted to be reminded, is—

"But if you wish for Greek to feed the soul, that fiery particle,  
Then come to Blackie's shop and get—the only genuine article."

This was followed by the presentation of the prizes, the winners being described in verse, always highly humorous, if also somewhat personal. On these occasions he generally had some friends with him on the platform. Once, when in the middle of a poetical description of a tall red-headed rustic, he turned suddenly to Dr Guthrie and said, "Do you see him? Yonder he is, like a beacon, on the back form."

Dr Gardiner, in speaking of his qualifications as a teacher of Greek, mentions the fascination

exercised on his mind by the study of Comparative Philology, in which “he contrived to awaken an interest by apt illustration. Competitors for the Philological Prize have been known to read the whole range of English books on the subject; and some afterwards devoted themselves to Sanscrit or Celtic, or with the aid of the Greek Travelling Scholarship, which was always said to be the gift of Blackie himself, they pursued the study of Greek Philology at a German university.”

Enough has been said on this subject, and it is time to turn to the public Educational work which he associated intimately with his position as Professor both in Aberdeen and Edinburgh. It has been told already, but a brief retrospect seems to be essential to this chapter, which is summarising and complementary. Such a retrospect he drew up himself towards the end of August 1894, and placed it in the writer's hands as his own estimate of the services which he had been enabled to do for Education. It runs as follows :—

1. Signed the Confession of Faith at my admission to the Latin Chair in Aberdeen under public protest and declaration; and the subsequent law case gave the pre-lusive note to the Repeal of the test in the case of Professors, which took place some years afterwards by Lord Moncreiff's Bill.

2. Gave breadth and catholicity to the Bursary examination in Marischal College by adding other subjects to the Latin version previously the sole test for bursaries in Aberdeen.

3. Gave a human and social character to the Latin scholarship by instituting social meetings and readings in Latin and Greek independently of regular class-work.

4. Was among the first to extend the influence of professorial teaching by taking an active part in popular lectures outside the University.

5. In Edinburgh protested strongly against the degradation of Scottish University teaching by the elementary standard in the Greek Class; was therefore thoroughly in favour of the Entrance Examination afterwards introduced; and in pamphlets and lectures all through the country, endeavoured to bring the people back to the standard of second-class Education, as set forth in the First Book of Discipline, c. 7.

6. Protested, both practically and by special work—and paper read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh—against the unnatural division between ancient and modern Greek, and the unscientific and insular habit of pronouncing the beautiful Greek language by the laws which regulate English intonation and accentuation.

7. Continued in Edinburgh regular social meetings unconnected with class-work, under the name of the Hellenic Society, for the purpose of giving a human significance and an intellectual fruit to the study of Greek in Scotland.

8. Indulged largely in popular lectures both in England and Scotland, with the double idea of spreading the seeds of fructifying thought among intelligent persons of all classes, and of stirring up the people to important ques-

tions of Educational Reform, which it was in vain to expect from the prejudiced class of professional teachers.

9. Protested strongly against the rigid routine of the Seven Classes in Arts as a qualification for the M.A. degree; and was warmly in favour of the optional principle of personal predilection within certain limits—a principle which, I understand, has been adopted and put into working order by the ordinances of the University Commission now sitting.

10. Have always denounced the cram system in examination, and advocated such a style of testing as will bring out the amount of thought and intelligence acting in the mind of the examinee, not mere learned results, which he has appropriated from without. JOHN S. BLACKIE.

Whatever he undertook he did with all his might. The quality of his work cannot be judged from narrow standpoints, whether of pedantry or of sect. Its worth was ethical rather than erudite, human rather than dogmatic. He was a seer and a teacher after the ancient mould, not a prig of either academic or ecclesiastic denomination. A strict Calvinist Celt admitted him into the company of the faithful in graphic terms: “Blackie’s neyther ōrthodōx, haiterodōx, nor ony ither dōx; he’s juist himsel’!”

On the platform he exhibited the same perfect independence. He had no confounding second thoughts about his utterances; he never hedged nor retracted, nor guarded himself from conse-

quences. If people misunderstood his gay humours, they might do so. He was healthy to the core, untainted by latter-day fevers which affect the mind with delirious audacity or chill it with apprehensive collapse. If Goethe and Aristotle had taught him the value of mental equipoise, St Paul and our Lord Jesus Christ taught him to work, to pray, to love, to surrender. He wasted no days in dull self-communings, no energy in slothful regrets.

Many stories are current of his eccentricities as a lecturer. They are not exaggerated. His appearance was the promise of a refreshing departure from the unwritten law of the platform. With his manuscript on a table for occasional reference, because he sometimes seemed to forget the very subject of his lecture, he marched to and fro and uttered all that occurred to him. The stream had its source, no doubt, in the opening sentences of his written address, but it took toll of whatever came in its way, and the main current was often overwhelmed by the tributary. No man but Blackie would have been allowed so to defy the conventionalities of public lecturing; but his manner was sincerely natural, and what his audience wanted was the man himself, spontaneous, effusive, and stimulating—not an hour's formal information on a given subject. "Mind

Blackie's sense and not his nonsense," he would comment after a succession of verbal fireworks; and even in these the sound sense was apparent. He was not careful to respect the susceptibilities of his hearers—indeed he rather enjoyed a thrust at local polemics, but it was too kindly to rouse any parry but laughter. Once at Dundee he found the reading-desk adorned with a lovely bouquet of flowers, and curtly commanded, "Take away that bauble."

In the learned Institutions of London and Edinburgh he preserved a more precisian method and kept carefully to his notes, but even there he relieved the tension with outbursts pugnacious and whimsical. Imagination falters when it seeks to depict his appearances in Oxford, and the fine contempt with which the use-and-wont bound dons must have turned aside his lance-thrust, straight and to the point.

In the provinces he might instruct, inveigh, or banter as he pleased. He was the despair of reporters, on whose presence he was apt to comment with scant deference, and who revenged themselves by reporting more of his nonsense than of his sense. Mr Burness remembers his "presiding at a meeting in support of Miss Burton's candidature for the School Board. He had made a very happy, vigorous speech, and resumed his

seat, when he suddenly started to his feet again and said, 'I have only to add that though my language is strong, my opinions are moderate—take that down, you blackguards.' ”

He would relieve the tedium of talking with a song, and would break off a serious disquisition on the influence of Goethe, to ask his chairman why he wasn't married. When Madame Annie Grey illustrated his lecture on "Scottish Song," he would kneel down on the platform and kiss her hand as she finished her delightful rendering. Once he introduced her to the audience as the "Show," adding, "I am but the showman." He horrified a meeting of teetotallers at which he presided by beginning his speech as follows:—

I cannot understand why I am asked to be here. I am not a teetotaller—far from it. If a man asks me to dine with him and does not give me a good glass of wine, I say he is neither a Christian nor a gentleman. Germans drink beer, Englishmen wine, ladies tea, and fools water.

It is true that he soothed the fluttered dove-cot by a strenuous appeal for temperance, but he was not again invited to take the lead on its behalf. His very temperance led him to revolt against total abstinence, and his value for the sacredness of a man's word showed him the danger of urging a pledge on those who took it and broke it without remorse.

Perhaps the most amusing instance of his tendency to personality on the platform occurred at Dunfermline. After the restoration of St Giles' Cathedral he was wont to advocate a greater beauty both in the structure and the ceremonial of Scottish churches. On this occasion he was lecturing on Scottish Song, and alluded particularly to the revival of sacred singing and the introduction of the organ into so many of the kirks. This innovation had roused the ire of conservative Presbyterians, who were anxious to retain the stern simplicity of the Reformation, and who looked upon such concessions as Romanising. The minister of Townhill, near Dunfermline, Mr Jacob Primmer, was their mouthpiece, and was deputed to stump the country in defence of bare walls and a precentor. On him the Professor loosed the vials of his invective. "I hear," he said, "you've got a man in this town called Jacob Primmer, who says that worship can't be true unless it is ugly. Let him come to me, and I'll prove him an ass in five minutes." At the close up stepped the Rev. Jacob Primmer and demanded to be proved an ass. The Professor was taken aback for a moment, but recovered with copious quotations from the Psalms, and wound up with a plea for dancing as a religious rite. Mr Primmer took it in excellent part, and next day the



two were seen arm in arm making a round of the sights of Dunfermline.

He has summed up his own misdemeanors in lines addressed to his wife, when she requested him to cultivate a manner void of offence on the platform of the Philosophical Institution. “Pious Resolutions, by a prospective Lecturer,” he called the verses :—

I sober truth and sense will speak,  
Sense from all nonsense free ;  
With wisdom in a perfect way  
Shall my two lectures be.  
I will endure no sportive whim  
Before my mind to play,  
No pictured bubble born to burst,  
But sober, grave, and grey !

I will not send a shallow jest  
Light rattling through the hall ;  
An idle and a foolish song  
I will not sing at all !  
I will not flourish my stout stick,  
Nor in my plaid appear,  
But sit like judges in the court,  
Sage, solemn, and severe !

I will not touch with rude offence  
A thin-skinned man at all,  
But softly shape the thornless thought  
To please both great and small.  
I will be polished in my phrase,  
Judicial in my tone,  
That all who hear well pleased shall say,  
How wise is Blackie grown !

As a diner-out his alert vivacity and repartee made him welcome. To sit beside Professor Blackie at a public banquet was to be one of the most happily placed at the table, although it involved some hard thumps on the back, and some effort to be equal to the sudden appeals for the faith within. It also involved liability to public embrace if the responses demanded were to the point and pleasing, but it also ensured immunity from boredom. Called upon for a song, and sometimes unrequested, the Professor would give "Jenny Geddes," "Woo'd and married and a'," or "Get up and bar the door," with vigour. In earlier days it was the "Battle of the Nile," or "Hermann the German," and then the voice was sweet and resonant. Towards the end its volume failed, and had to be supplemented with action suited to the verse.

In conversation he liked to startle, and shone as a fighter. Calling on a lady, he said abruptly, "When I walk along Princes Street, I go with a kingly air, my head erect, my chest expanded, my hair flowing, my plaid flying, my stick swinging. Do you know what makes me do that? Well, I'll tell you—just *con-ceit*."

Mr Seton relates that "at a dinner-party given by the late Sir James Falshaw a verbal contest took place between Blackie and Dr Hodgson, in

which some excellent hits were made on both sides—Blackie excited and explosive, while Hodgson was calm and self-controlled. At last the Greek Professor put down his knife and fork with the cry, ‘Hodgson, I surrender!’”

Sometimes he would rise and make a tour of the table to reach his antagonist and tackle him more effectually. He took everything in good part, and expected the like treatment from others.

But nowhere was he seen to such advantage as at the meetings of the Hellenic Society, particularly when these took place in his own house. Mr Burness in the following pages gives us a glimpse into the social doings on these occasions:—

Professor Blackie was seen at his very best at the meetings of the Hellenic Society. These were held fortnightly during the winter months in the houses of members by rotation. It is impossible to give any one who never saw him on these occasions any idea of the versatility of his talent, the brilliance and readiness of his wit, or the exuberance of his animal spirits. I was admitted in 1859, and among the members at that time were Dr Lindsay Alexander, Dr John Brown, Lord Neaves, Robert Herdman, Prof. Gairdner, Dr John Muir, Celt Nicolson, Prof. Bayne, Dr Donaldson, and the Rev. Alexander Webster. We got through a good deal of Greek, but the great feature of the meetings was the *symposium* which followed. As the hour drew nigh, the Professor became conscious, as he said, of a *knisa* (Gr. *κνίσα*) which, ascending from

the dining-room, gradually became perceptible in the drawing-room, where the readings were held. When the tables were cleared the Professor generally quoted in paraphrase the motto of the 'Noctes Ambrosianæ':—

"This is a distich by wise old Phocylides,  
An ancient who wrote crabbed Greek in no silly days;  
Meaning, 'Tis right for good wine-bibbing people  
Not to let the jug pace round the board like a cripple,  
But gaily to chat while discussing their tipples.'  
An excellent rule of the hearty old cock 'tis—  
And a very fit motto to put to our Noctes."

Then fixing his eye on the symposiarch, he rose to propose the health of that gentleman, first commanding the removal of any epergne or ornament which obstructed his view. This he did in the historic phrase, "Remove that bauble!" His speeches were simply inimitable; but they were surpassed by his songs. I question whether anything he has said or written will survive "Sam Sumph" or "Jenny Geddes." The only other regular toast permitted was that of the *Despoina*, unless there happened to be a distinguished stranger present, when a similar compliment was paid to him. If the unfortunate man happened to be from Oxford or Cambridge, the honour done him was almost neutralised by the torrent of abuse with which his University was at the same time assailed. Alas! "Where be your gibes now? Your gambols? Your songs? Your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table in a roar?" The remembrance of Blackie and the Hellenic Society suggests the reminder to Ben Jonson of

"Those lyric feasts  
Where men such clusters had  
As made them nobly wild, not mad;  
While yet each verse of thine  
Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine."

The following is a specimen of how the Professor's health was sometimes drunk at these jovial meetings:—

“TO PROFESSOR BLACKIE.

“Blackie ! thou art a Scotsman to the core,—  
No ‘Oxford prig episcopizer,’ fed  
On cates and comfits and the rosy red  
Of alien grape ; but one who lovest more  
Cauld kail from Aberdeen’s grim granite shore,  
Haggis and brose of Athole, kebbuck instead  
Of gorgonzola ; for thy dress a plaid ;  
For lyre the pipes ; for letters Celtic lore.

Thou hear’st not Beethoven ; and thy spirit loathes  
The idiot song of West-End coteries.  
‘Oh for some lilt of love and lover’s oaths  
Sung by some Hebe of the Hebrides,  
Or Oban auburn maid trampling the clothes  
And standing in her tub, as erst Diogenes.’”

In far corners of the world his name was an inspiration to Scotchmen who had known him. The home papers were ransacked for news of Blackie. An old student recorded in the pages of ‘The Liberal’ soon after his death:—

It was the writer’s fortune once, in the dense Australian bush, hundreds of miles distant from the nearest civilisation, to come across a shingle-splitter who had seen better days, but whom the drink demon had reduced from the status of a scholar to that of a waif and a pariah. As we sat beside his camp-fire watching our “billy” of tea boil, as soon as he knew I hailed from Edinburgh he cried, “Man, how’s old Blackie?” In the very bowels of the earth once, when down some five hundred feet in the famous Prince Imperial Gold Mine, on the Thames Field,

New Zealand, a humble miner, who nevertheless could write M.A. after his name, accosted me with the query, "I say, mate, were you under good old Blackie in Edinburgh?" Go where you pleased—and I have wandered over a good part of the world's surface—there you would find men who not only had been students under the grand old man, but who loved him and revered him even as sons a father.

And men who had not come directly in contact with him had caught the same contagion of love and reverence from what they knew of his life and work. A friend travelling in South Africa found hospitality at a farmhouse in a lonely spot, far from neighbours and from news. She asked the farmer what requital she could make on her return to Scotland. "Send me Blackie's last book," he said; "nothing could be so welcome." He got it with the author's autograph and a verse of his writing for inscription.

Mr Lees of Boleside, Galashiels, coming back from New York some years ago, found in the steage, which he used to visit, an engineer who had made a little competence in the West Indies, and was coming home to spend it in making his old mother comfortable. Talking of Edinburgh one day this man asked him, "Div ye ken Blackie?" and when Mr Lees explained that the Professor and he were personal friends, the worthy engineer seized his arm and shook it in his excite-

ment: "Ye ken Blackie! ye ken Blackie! Man, he's juist ma deity!"

One summer day Mr Lees took an old nurse—"of ninety years"—a jaunt up Yarrow on the coach. Blackie was a fellow-passenger, and talked away with friendly readiness to her, and when he left she turned in great excitement to say, "Eh, he's graund! He's a' folks say o' him."

Professor Blackie was no politician so far as party politics go. He was, as he said himself, "not a politician, but a student of politics—in-terested in public measures and administration only so far as they enabled him to comprehend the principles on which political conduct is based, and out of which social progress proceeds." From the party point of view he felt himself "an altogether exceptional creature in this corner of the world. As a practical man and a good citizen, I only take part in political movements when I see that I can thoroughly understand the debatable ground, and can do some good by giving my vote on the right side."

It is not surprising to find, therefore, that his vote was given sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other. He explains in the "Notes" that "in the main I have been a Liberal, though I voted twice with the Tories, to the great astonishment of partisan politicians. To my nature

there is nothing more abhorrent than party feeling; my delight is on all occasions to search out and to acknowledge the good of my antagonist, and to give him my hearty applause when I think he is right." Following this inclination, he once gave one of his two votes in Edinburgh to a Liberal and the other to a Tory, because he liked the men, and saw no reason why both parties should not be represented in Parliament to correct each other! "None the less I was a good sound Liberal: God made me so emphatically."

Only where great public enthusiasm demanded reforms far higher than party motives, could he feel himself at the source of their movement, and in sympathy with their direction. All attempts to enrol him as a partisan were ineffectual, and he retained for himself the liberty of speaking and voting as he pleased. He attacked what seemed to him injustice and wrong-dealing in high places in his own way.

The moment I saw my adversary clearly defined before me, I marched at once into his camp with drawn sword in hand, and gave him my card. This abrupt way of asserting far-reaching principles, and it may be attacking time-hallowed institutions, though it might not have been always *prudent*, as the world loves the word, was, I am convinced, the way in which God meant me to act.



## CHAPTER XXII.

RECREATIONS OF AN EMERITUS PROFESSOR.

1882-1887.

THE ten years following his retirement were spent by Professor Blackie in an activity by no means abated, although it was more under his control. He had time for correspondence, for reading, for constant comment in the pages of newspapers and magazines on such questions as had long occupied his thoughts or anew attracted them, for writing books, for lecturing, for visiting,—and all these occupations increased upon his hands. Constantly his voice was uplifted in the old war-cries against Tory and Radical alike, ringing defiantly in the peace-loving groves of Oxford, appealing to the world in the columns of the ‘Times.’ Perhaps his crusades were for the time depreciated by reiteration, or by his indifference

to the quality of the ears to which they were proclaimed. A more elegant propaganda might have propitiated Olympus; but his way was to deliver his message to all comers in season and out of season.

He was busy during the winter after his resignation with compiling his 'Wisdom of Goethe,' published by Messrs Blackwood & Sons early in 1883, and dedicated to his friend Dr Walter C. Smith. This little book was suggested by his experience of the failures made by many young men for want of a clear understanding of their relations to life, and he desired to bring to their notice the principles of "sound thinking and noble living" which he himself had found in Goethe's reflections. The selections were made to illuminate all the conditions of a man's environment or development, and they were prefaced with an "Estimate of the character of Goethe," partly biographical and partly apologetic.

Immediately after, he was much occupied with meditation and correspondence upon a higher theme, that of the Hegelian conception of the Divine Being, and this led his attention into the various channels of religious doctrine. On that of Calvinism he corresponded with his neighbour Professor Blaikie. No aspect of religious thought was more distasteful to him, in spite of his

patriotic pride in the men whose rugged Calvinism strengthened them to heroic defence of their religious liberty. He could not be got to admit that he was a sinner. He protested that he was nothing of the sort. He detested the coarser forms of sin, his charity was known of all men, his sincerity and courage were unassailable, and he rather claimed for virtue such bluntness, inconsiderateness, and self-assertion as constituted his admitted failings. To him they were part of the panoply with which Providence had armed him for the battle of life. It was, however, as a protest against the grovelling confessions of sin peculiar to sectarian Calvinists, which failed to stimulate the sinner to walk uprightly, and were apt to coexist with ways entirely consonant with their admissions, that he emphasised this view of his own exemption. He abhorred, as all sane men must abhor, cant, exaggeration, and censoriousness.

This winter was brightened to both Professor and Mrs Blackie by the presence of a lively guest, the son of Mr James Archer and the Professor's name-child. Jack Archer spent six months with them, attending the College classes, and bringing the wholesome influences of youth into their home.

The Professor was at Dalmeny when Lord

Rosebery's second son was christened, on January 22, and at the luncheon afterwards "the champagne was poured out of an enormous beaker, into which three dozen bottles had been emptied, leaving two-thirds of the hollow unfilled! The health of the boy was proposed, and that of the host and hostess." He fired off the appropriate sonnet at the banquet.

In March he was upholding the rights of Skye Crofters in the 'Scotsman,' which attacked him *more suo*, and whose personalities he ignored. The Crofters' Commission was appointed in the spring, and he was keenly interested in its members and plan of inquiry. The chairman, Lord Napier and Ettrick, he esteemed highly, and he was pleased that Sheriff Nicolson, a leal son of Skye, was included in the membership.

Towards the end of May he went to London, staying with his brother-in-law, Dr George Wyld, for a fortnight. A breakfast with Mr Gladstone on May 31, not described in detail, and some Homeric theatricals at Lady Freake's, were his chief social experiences.

In his study of the Land Laws affecting various parts of the kingdom, he had become interested in their development in the Channel Islands, and accepted an invitation to stay in Jersey with his friend the Rev. Dr Nicolson, who wished him to

give a lecture at St Héliers on behalf of the organ fund for the Presbyterian Church there. He started for the island on June 8, and spent nearly three weeks exploring and enjoying this new field, delighted with all he learned, and commemorating in his letters the "Flowers, Fruit, and Friendship" for which Jersey is renowned. His lecture came off on June 21. Its subject was "The Highlanders," and he illustrated it with song and recitation. The Governor was present and made a most sympathetic speech, and the proceeds handed to the organ fund were £14. The famous "kail-runt" was bought a day or two before the lecture. He summed up the sevenfold interests of Jersey as "Potatoes, Cows, Cabbages, Crabs, Oysters, the Norman-French Language, and its Land-tenure," and strung his "Praise of Jersey" into rhyme to be sold for the benefit of the organ. Every morning he studied the history and economy of the island; after lunch he explored, and the evenings were spent in making a crowd of new acquaintances. When he left on June 25, the pier was crowded with friends to bid him farewell. "A whole bevy of handsome young ladies were on the pier waiting to smile sadly and sweetly on the old gentleman as he left their lovely isle."

Perhaps the most interesting excursion which

he made during this time was to a little village inland, where his half-brother Gregory had died many years before, and in whose churchyard he had been buried.

On his return to town, he stayed—where he felt most at home—with his friends Mr and Mrs Archer. A host of engagements awaited him, new acquaintances to make, amongst them Sir Edwin Arnold; old friends to visit, amongst them Mr Froude and Mr Browning. On June 30 he lunched with the latter.

He was frank and free and full of talk; altogether an agreeable, rational, intelligent, sound-headed and sound-hearted man; with no poetical or other nonsense about him; a manly, hard-hitting Englishman, as in his most effective work he certainly appears.

A week later the two exchanged photographs.

A visit to Westminster Abbey brought him face to face with his ignorance of the early kings and queens of England, and in the midst of the season's diversions he set himself to read of their lives and vicissitudes. A quotation from his letter of July 6 speaks of a call on "Tyndall and his lady. We had a fine flow of hock and a more genial interflow of soul; and I am going back again, so much have we learned to love one another—not at all easy in this big Bustledom."

He was weary of London "crushes, vain, uncomfortable, glittering parades."

A dinner at Lord Rosebery's took place on the 10th.

An old lady with tremendous bushy curls of a ruddy tinge was before me, who turned out to be Lady Aylesbury. At dinner, in a room resplendent with silver, I sat beside a laughing, rattling girl from Vienna, dealing in the light, negative badinage that is current amongst idle people in fashionable circles. I told her she ought to study Goethe, and not to delight in nonsense, however clever, and we parted on perfectly good terms, exchanged cards and mottoes; hers, what you might have expected, something to the tune of "Is life worth living?" which, whosoever asks, being of sound liver, ought in my opinion to be shot.

A few days later he returned to Scotland, and spent all August with Mrs Blackie at St Boswells. There he occupied his morning hours with renewed study of the Land Laws, and that from both points of view, as his correspondence with large landed proprietors indicates. Macmillan had accepted an article on Jersey for the October number of his Magazine, and this was part of his summer work. He was anxious to extend his studies to Ireland, and an invitation to visit Professor and Mrs Butler at Killarney gave him the opportunity of partially doing so on Irish soil. He returned to Edinburgh early in September

to prepare for this, and spent a few days at Douglas Crescent, collecting books on the subject, correcting proofs, and amongst other things attending a midnight banquet on the occasion of the opening of the Edinburgh Lyceum.

I supped at 12.30, and returned from the banquet at 4 A.M., very much surprised to find myself toddling home at that hour of the morning, and going to bed when the rest of the world had finished their first sleep. It was very pleasant, Henry Irving altogether natural and agreeable and gentlemanly. The speaking was short and good, and the songs excellent. Howard, who was in the chair, asked me to propose the health of Miss Ellen Terry ; but I, with my usual good sense, devolved the matter on the Dean of Faculty, who knew something about the girl, of whom I knew only a trifle more than nothing. However, I didn't escape altogether, so at 3.30 in the morning I sang "March, march, Ettrick and Teviotdale," with great applause. Wyndham the elder was there, looking, as usual, like a well-dressed, well-combed, and well-brushed Eton boy with smooth and bright cheeks.

He recovered from this nocturne in a twelve hours' sleep on board the Dublin boat, and reached his destination on the 12th September. Here he gave himself up to study of the new Land Acts for a week, and then drove to Kenmare to stay with Mr and Mrs Trench, his hosts on a former visit ; and from Kenmare he went to Dromore Castle, where he had an opportunity of attending a meeting of the Land Commissioners' Court. All



he saw confirmed his earlier impressions, but he found the "oppressors" very kindly hosts. His wanderings took him into Galway, and he did not leave Ireland till the 10th of October.

Several important matters awaited his return. Lord Napier and Ettrick, in a letter dated July 8, had written :—

I hope you will give the Crofters' Commission an opportunity of hearing you on a subject to which you have devoted so much pains and so much love. Perhaps you will attend us in Edinburgh by-and-by. I think of engaging the room at the Parliament House in which the Scotch Privy Council administered the *Question*, if it still exists! I fear it does not, or they may have met in the Tolbooth; but, at any rate, you will be prepared to give an account of the faith that is in you—especially as to the evidence of that consuetudinary right in the soil which you discover in the humble clansmen of the past! I am, at least, one who earnestly desires that the benefits and enjoyments of property should be more widely diffused among our countrymen than has hitherto been the case, believing that there is no greater evil in a State than indigent intelligence.

The Professor's evidence, or rather opinion, was given with much vivacity on October 24.

Another concern was the election of a Lord Rector for the University of Edinburgh. This election was wont to be conducted on political party lines, and the chosen candidates of the two parties were Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr

Trevelyan. A few of the students desired to break the record of purely political elections, and requested Professor Blackie to stand as an independent candidate. However admirable their motive, it was regrettable that he acceded to this request, as party spirit amongst the students was too strong to make his success possible, and he was exposed not only to the reckless personalities of such an occasion, but to inevitable defeat, and even to the accusation of having injured the chance of the Liberal candidate. Sir Stafford Northcote was elected, and made, as all know who saw and heard him during the Tercentenary functions of the following spring, a dignified and charming representative of the University.

The year ended with a lecturing tour on the subject of the Crofters and the Land Laws. When he expounded the matter at St Andrews, the Professors prudently abstained from attendance! The year 1884 was devoted, like its predecessors, to the same question, and this study culminated towards its close in the publication of his book entitled 'The Scottish Highlanders and the Land Laws,' and dedicated to Mr John Bright.

His lecturing crusade began in January at Manchester, where he preached "the gospel of just and fair laws," demanding, "Is Mammon or

Jehovah henceforth to be supremely worshipped in this land?"

Here he called on the Bishop of Manchester, "a fine, well-built, hearty, healthy, and rosy Scot: quite a blessing to the city, and respected by all parties, except of course a few ceremonialists, who prefer the dress of the Church on all occasions to the soul of the Church."

From Manchester he went to Birkenhead, to stay with his nephew, and to speak at the annual meeting of Mrs Birt's "Sheltering Home for Destitute Children."

To go into the streets of such a place as Liverpool [he ended], look upon the castaway weeds of humanity, pluck them up, nurse them, put them into greenhouses, that is a reverence which only those can practise who live in the most purified atmosphere of the highest Christianity.

The months of early spring passed in writing his forthcoming book, and in corresponding with members of Parliament, with landlords and others, on the two subjects of Education in the Highlands and the Land Laws.

On the 16th, 17th, and 18th of April 1885 he was engaged with all the Edinburgh world in receiving and entertaining the University's guests from all parts of Europe. Professor Donner from Helsingfors stayed with him during that memor-

able celebration of the Tercentenary, whose lions were Robert Browning, Virchow, Pasteur, and Count Aurelio Saffi.

The Professor liked his guest cordially, and approved his book on 'Scottish Families in Finland and Sweden.' Another friend made and entertained was M. Emile Laveleye, the Belgian statesman, who died recently. The Professor contributed to the imposing service in St Giles', which inaugurated the celebration, his own beautiful Hymn of Praise.

Towards the middle of May he was busy reading the Report issued by the chairman of the Crofters' Commission, with hearty appreciation of the evidence collected, and some demur at its apologetic tone otherwise. On May 24 he went to London to stay with Mr and Mrs Archer. His first object was to secure a publisher for the 'Scottish Highlanders,' in which he had some difficulty; but eventually Messrs Chapman & Hall, who had brought out a third edition of 'Altavona,' undertook to be its sponsors.

For three weeks of his stay in town he avoided society, and refreshed his mind by reading the history of Whitehall, the Temple, and the Tower, making frequent visits to each, and getting their significance well fixed in his memory, as he had done that of Westminster Abbey the year

before. ' A touch of apprehension dictated this mood. He wrote on May 29 :—

I am making very few calls, as I am determined for some time to be master of my movements and do some effective work while I am here, and surrounded by grand and gracious influences. God knows how soon I may be cramped and cradled into imbecility.

He made two new acquaintances in the early part of June, both of whom interested him greatly. One was Mr Frederic Harrison, and the other Mr R. F. Horton of Lyndhurst Road, Hampstead. The latter he learned to know while spending a few days with his sister, Mrs Kennedy, in Hampstead. On June 8 he went to Lyndhurst Road Church, "and heard the young prophet Horton, a prophet indeed! learning and force and polish and poetry and sense combined; the finest thing I have yet set my eyes on in London; a man worth going a thousand miles to hear." After the service he went to see the preacher in the vestry, and somewhat startled him by kissing him, German fashion, on both cheeks. The acquaintance ripened into hearty mutual regard, and was renewed from year to year.

A meeting of the Celtic Society, where he spoke on the Land Laws; a boating expedition with Mr and Mrs Holman Hunt; a visit to Mr

Hunt's studio to see the "Triumph of the Innocents"; a lecture by George MacDonald on "Wordsworth," when the Professor preached a counteracting gospel according to Goethe; a reception and breakfast at the Premier's, and many other interesting matters, occupied his time after the middle of June.

On the 28th he heard the debate in Parliament on the Crofters' Commissioners' Report, and was by no means satisfied with its tone. On the 30th he spoke at a great meeting in the city organised to draw attention to the matter; and early in July he quitted the season's distractions for Scotland, and joined Mrs Blackie at Peebles. Here he took to the History of the Borders, and to walks no longer so extended as formerly; and on August 9 he went by train to Oban, there to join Mr M'Farlane and his family on board the Santa Maria, and to spend a delightful fortnight amongst the islands and lochs in a kind of private crofter inquiry cruise. He spoke at meetings, prepared or improvised, at Portree, Stornoway, and elsewhere; visited the place where the fences were pulled down on August 13; indulged in much sympathetic "sedition," and bade his host adieu on the 25th with real regret.

He was in Edinburgh for a few days, but

returne<sup>d</sup> to the North on September 2 for a round of meetings and visits, amongst the latter to Dunrobin, Conan House, and Glen Tana. He profited by these to gain information from the proprietor's as well as from the crofter's point of view. His book was now well forward, and on his return to Edinburgh the manuscript was despatched to Messrs Chapman & Hall.

The most interesting incident of October was his election as a member of the Executive Committee for establishing a British School of Archæology in Athens. In November Mr Horton was in Edinburgh lecturing at the Philosophical Institution, and dined with Professor and Mrs Blackie. The concluding weeks of 1884 were employed in lecturing tours, first in Scotland, and then at Manchester, Leeds, and Birmingham,—on Burns, on the Land Laws, and on “Beauty in Nature and Art.” What leisure he had was occupied in correcting proofs, and in writing on the philosophy of language.

At the end of the year he received the first copies of ‘The Scottish Highlanders and the Land Laws,’ and despatched the dedication volume to Mr John Bright about Christmas. Mr Bright wrote after its perusal:—

The whole story of the past and present of the crofter class is not a little one of a melancholy character, and

their future is not easily perceived. Land which is not fertile and a climate most uncertain offer little promise of prosperity or of ordinary comfort to the people, and any possible changes in the law will, I fear, not bring about the improvement which you and I so much wish for. Whether any real good is done or not, you have laid the case before the country in a book of much interest. I have to thank you for the kind words in which you have connected my name with your labours on behalf of your suffering people.

Letters poured in from readers of the book who were on either side of the Crofter question. All agreed in acknowledging the vigour with which it was written, the range of study which formed its foundation. The latter has been indicated at the various times to which each branch belonged. He summed it up in the Preface as follows :—

It became manifest to me that the special evils under which the Highlanders groaned were no isolated phenomenon, but were merely the natural result of a general one-sided and unjust body of Land Laws, of which the operation in the remote Highlands, as in Ireland, had been intensified by local peculiarities. I was accordingly forced to widen the sphere of my studies, and to inquire systematically into the rural economics and agrarian legislation in various countries of Europe, for the purpose of contrast and comparison. Once put upon this scent, I found, by reading and by observation made on the spot, ample materials for important inductions in Rome, in Florence, in Germany, and in the Channel Islands. I then read all the books and pamphlets I could procure on rural



economy and on the Land Laws, both from the legal and the economical point of view ; and I crowned my studies with a careful perusal of the Report of the late Royal Commission on the condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands.

An interesting feature of the book is the *Testimonia Sapientum*, which follows the Preface, and which records the convictions of the wise of all ages, from Job and Aristotle to St Paul, Shakespeare, Laveleye, and Sismondi, on the tyranny of land monopolists. The book is divided into three parts—the Scottish Highlanders, the Land Laws, and the Crofters' Commission. Its treatment of each is forcible and instructive. Perhaps the whole loses interest from a certain discursiveness, which had become a mental habit, due to overmuch lecturing ; but it remains a valuable contribution to informative literature on the subjects with which it deals.

Early in 1885 Altnacraig was let for a lease of five years, subsequently extended, which relieved Professor and Mrs Blackie from expense and anxiety regarding their West Highland home. The first quarter of the new year was devoted to activities become normal—lectures, speeches as chairman of meetings, usually those of working men, and articles for magazines. It is impossible to overtake them all, and their record would be

but dull reiteration—not that they were dull, but that they resembled each other, and followed in each other's wake. Two articles contributed to the 'Pupil-Teachers' Monthly' deserve notice, however, as in them he reopened his campaign on the learning and teaching of languages prosecuted through his remaining years, and sharing their devotion with the pronunciation of Greek and the gospel of a Scottish Scotland. In these articles he advocated, as of old, the living practice of the tongue and the ear in acquiring a language, as taught by the method of nature; and the further cultivation of each language philologically.

From the first of May to the middle of June he was in and about London as usual, returning to Edinburgh by Oxford and Liverpool. This holiday was more given up to personal enjoyment than even formerly, and it is needless to repeat the tale of its visits and banquets. The most interesting of the former was a stay with Lord Lytton at Knebworth, which he described in a letter dated June 10:—

I never was in such a grand house or slept in such a grand bed. The bedroom was wonderful for a poor Scotch professor—all panelled and carved, and studded with various armorial bearings and rare old portraits, including Edmund Spenser. The room was called Hampden's room,

from some old tradition of his lodging here. Somehow the Earl has a great notion of the Pro., saying that I had taught him long ago the proper method of studying Greek, and that my translation of *Æschylus* is the only one that contains real poetry. Perhaps this is true, and, at all events, is very agreeable to Oldie. In the drawing-room, by particular request, I sang the "Quaker's Wife" and the "Bonnie House o' Airlie," and this morning I wrote a poem in the guest-book.

"Oldie" was a domestic rendering of the old Adam. In Oxford he stayed with Mr and Mrs Ritchie, and was made much of.

The summer was spent in various places—Yarrow, Peebles, Dumfriesshire—and in autumn he was back in Douglas Crescent, preparing lectures, contributing to Mr Reid's 'Why I am a Liberal,' and writing in the 'Scotsman' on a burning subject, the Disestablishment of the Church of Scotland. His attitude towards this question is constantly misrepresented. He had no sympathy with the Disestablishment party. Their reasons did not seem to him to be of importance, and he deemed the Church of Scotland associated in the national life with the preservation of the national liberties. Had there been in that Church the menace to Protestantism which has appeared in the Anglican system, no one would have more stoutly demanded its destruction as an organisation. He admitted that the Church of God has nothing to

do with externals, and that even were the Scottish Church deprived of its loaves and fishes, it would survive, a spiritual body. But it displeased him that there should be an outcry against an institution which presented a noble front to the world of workers for the truth.

In November he lectured at Kelso on Goethe to an enthusiastic audience, going thence to Airdrie on a like errand. When he returned to Edinburgh, it was to resume a study of the lessons taught by history concerning the connection between Church and State, on which he lectured twice in December to the members of the Philosophical Institution. These lectures were published by Messrs Macmillan in England, and by Messrs Scribner in America, in the form of a small volume entitled 'What does History Teach?'

Impartial history [he sums up] offers no countenance to the notion that Established Churches, when well flanked by dissent, and in an age when the spiritual ruler has ceased to make the arm of the State the tool of intolerance, are contrary either to piety or policy. Christianity, of course, stands in no need of an Established Church; religion existed three hundred years in the Church without any State connection, and may exist again; but Christianity does above all things abhor the stirring up of strife betwixt Church and Church from motives of jealousy, envy, or greed.

Perhaps the "impartial history" is too profoundly complicated to be mastered in a study of some four months' duration.

He turned from the subject with relief to the preparation of notes on "Scottish Song," on "Jacobite Songs," and on "Robert Burns," and spent three weeks of January 1886 in an English lecturing tour—at Leicester, Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Walsall, Kendal, Carlisle, and Newcastle—from which he returned triumphantly on January 28. In February he lectured in Edinburgh on "Scottish Song." It was about this time that he made the acquaintance of our delightful Scottish singer Madame Annie Grey, and a hearty friendship ensued between the two staunch patriots. It was Professor Blackie's influence which strengthened Madame Annie Grey's devotion to Scottish song, and led her to sacrifice all openings in other directions. It became a habit for both to co-operate several times a year—the Professor as lecturer and Madame Grey as illustrator—in expounding to Scottish audiences the infinite range and charm of their native music.

A correspondence with Mr Ruskin on kingship, virginal womanhood, household womanhood, and good workmanship, made the early months of this year interesting. The Professor sent him his

little book on Church and State, acknowledged as "wise and helpful."

An event which gave him great pleasure was the appointment of his valued friend and old student, Dr Donaldson, to be Principal of the University of St Andrews. He was busy, too, with an enthusiastic review of Sir Theodore Martin's translation of 'Faust' for the 'Nineteenth Century,' as well as with a correspondence concerning Greek accents as illustrated by ancient writers on music, with Professor Monro, who agreed with him that the accents had been put to indicate a certain amount of emphasis, although he doubted whether it was given with more force than in French, endorsing his opinion with the testimony that accentual poetry is common in modern but not in ancient Greek.

During this winter the Professor had shown some hospitality to two Greek students from Smyrna, Constantine and Elias Simitopoulos, with the pleasant consequences of a warm acknowledgment from their family, accompanied by gifts of honey, sweetmeats, and little antique figures. In Greece, and wherever modern Greeks resided, his name was become a household word. Many years had elapsed since his first efforts to reinstate modern Greek in its true heredity had

been welcomed in Athens, and all his utterances on the subject were eagerly published and perused there, so that during the last score of his years he received constant acknowledgments from Greeks of their gratitude and veneration, and these were amongst the most valued of the tributes showered upon him.

Towards the end of May he went to London to stay with the Archers. He had selected from the overflow of his songs and sonnets a certain number for publication. These he called 'Mensis Vitæ,' or 'Gleanings from a Happy Life,' because they included the expression of his cheerful and reverent wisdom, as well as allusion to the many persons who had made life interesting to him, and the Scottish "traditions, shrines, and melodies," to the celebration of which he was increasingly devoted. He dedicated the volume "To the Students of the Scottish Universities," because "there is not a little in it that owed its inspiration to the contagion of fresh young minds, and to the leisure for cultivating the Muse afforded me by the usage of what, in Scotland at least, I cannot but regard as the happiest of all human avocations, the profession of an Academical teacher." Messrs Macmillan accepted the book, and it was published in October.

His publisher secured, he set himself to drain

the cup of London enjoyment, as he liked it, mixed with pleasure and profit in due proportion. He was present in the House of Commons on that eventful 1st of June when Mr Gladstone's Irish Bill was rejected, and made the acquaintance of many members, whom he sought to interest in his new war-cry of "Home Rule for Scotland." It is characteristic that as the pleasant dream of restoring a Parliament in Edinburgh more and more bedazzled his patriotic imagination, he deserted the Irish cause and became a notable Unionist.

The Colonial and Indian Exhibition was a feature of that season, and interested him far more than the preceding displays. He visited it some twelve times. He saw 'Faust' from the gallery of the Lyceum, but found its presentment of the great story distorted. He made a study of the National Gallery with his usual energy. Amongst social doings, a luncheon-party with Lord Rosebery best merits allusion. He described it in a letter written on June 7 :—

We had a very pleasant party at Lansdowne House last Saturday. A little circular parlour with a dome above, and a little round table in the middle with a few chosen guests, numbering eight in all, including mine host and hostess; Lord and Lady Aberdeen; Ferguson of Novar, a square-browed Scot with a bright open face;



Drummond, the scientific religionist of the hour, tall and handsome; Villiers of the Foreign Office, and Calcraft of the Board of Trade.

Three weeks of town proved enough, and he got home in time to snatch a glimpse of Oliver Wendell Holmes, who was that summer in Scotland.

Mrs Blackie and he made Moffat their summer quarters, and this set him once more on the track of the Covenanters, his gleanings from local sites and traditions being utilised in a lecture on "Scottish Nationality" delivered in August to a Moffat audience. This, a special lecture devoted to Peden the Prophet, and the series on Scottish songs, served for three autumn campaigns—two of them in England, one in Forfarshire. He found local singers in most places, who helped to illustrate his musical discourses: on one occasion that year, when he was lecturing at Renton on the Jacobites, the chairman proved equal to "Cam' ye by Athole" and "The wee German Lairdie."

An interesting guest was with him towards the end of the year, Prince Krapotkin, staying during the fortnight necessary for his appearances at the Philosophical Institution. His host was absent in Yorkshire for part of this time, being much lionised, from which fate he was glad to get home to such familiar occupations as the frequent letter to

the 'Scotsman,' when an old subject budded and broke into a new blossom of thought. Thus he was denouncing the study of Latin and Greek in December, and asserting the sufficiency of any modern language both as mental exercise and as equipment for life. He certainly underrated the importance of the classics to literary style, as many a scholar proceeded to intimate by letter.

The year 1887 began with a lecture on "Burns" in Edinburgh, and with the intimation from a Rabbi in New York that his beautiful psalm—

"Angels holy,  
High and lowly,"

had been included in the Jewish Hymnal there. February was made interesting by a visit from Professor Rhys, and by a prolonged correspondence with the Bishop of St Andrews on the Christian Hierarchy, a matter on which the Professor and the Prelate were by no means of one mind. Lectures and lay sermons occupied March and April, and by the end of May he was in London, his solitary journey having been tempered by the singing of Scottish songs a great part of the way. He had new acquaintances to see—amongst them Dr A. C. Mackenzie, who set some of his ballads to music, and Miss Agnes Smith, the well-known Hellenist and

traveller. Mrs Blackie was at Harrogate with a friend.<sup>6</sup> His stay in town was bisected by a visit to Professor Rhys in Oxford. The first part was devoted to Loftie's 'History of London,' with verifying rambles; and the second included, amongst other festivities, a view of the Jubilee procession from the windows of the Baroness Burdett Coutts's house, when he was recognised by the crowd and cheered. A dinner at the Mansion House and a garden-party at Dollis Hill belong to the second part of his season in London. Of the latter Mr Gladstone wrote on June 19:—

The constant influx of visitors prevented me from having a moment with you yesterday, except to congratulate you on your perpetual youth. I write to perform a duty and secure a pleasure. I have read your volume of poems ['*Messis Vitæ*'], or the greater part of it, with wonder at its elasticity and freshness, and admiration of its healthy and joyous tone, as well as memory power. There are two or three iconoclastic lines on p. 126 which I am wicked enough to wish to cut out of the good company in which they stand.

The passage alluded to occurs in the sonnet called "Christ and Christendom," a noble repulse of modern show and sham, of ritualism too *versus* pure worship,—a protest in advance of what is becoming the test of true religion, "What would He say?"

Of the year 1887 there is little more to record. The summer was happily spent in the manse of Selkirk, and already he was reading up the life of Burns for his contribution to the "Great Writers" series, published in February of the following year.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

“LIVING GREEK.”

1888-1891.

CONCERNING the ‘Life of Burns,’ Dr Stodart Walker, the Professor’s nephew, writes :—

I asked him once why he wrote this book. “Well,” he said, “I was asked to do it, and at first I refused, for I can never do work to order. But then I thought a little, and I said to myself, There are two kinds of persons who may write that life. First, the blind hero-worshipper, who will write a useless blatant kind of work; and then another much worse person, who will play the righteous uncharitable moralist with Burns, and probably look at him through his own myopic lenses. I felt that I understood Burns, and that righteousness and mercy could guide my course.”

How he succeeded can best be understood by reading the book. It has been accounted “a tender and yet masterly review of the greatest

lyric poet of his native land." He neither suppresses nor extenuates the wrong done by Burns, but he teaches us to understand the man's temperament,—with its glow of genius, its self-respect, its temptations, its deep remorse, its unassailable dignity in presence of his dull accusers.

The author lectured on the subject of Burns in Kilmarnock at the time of its publication, and records how he was treated with great hospitality of a teetotal character, out of keeping with the place and the occasion.

Like Mr Gladstone, he was during his closing years the recipient of many gifts — amongst them, of the "Liberal umbrella" from Mr Joseph Wright; and he figured in a clever advertisement of the "Drooko umbrella," which gave the ministering public of cab and 'bus drivers a handy nickname for him. His leisure was occupied with an article for the March 'Forum,'—on "Scottish Nationality,"—fiercely patriotic, as was his wont on that subject. Letters were coming from old friends about his 'Life of Burns'—from Sir Daniel Wilson at Toronto, with pathetic retrospect of the changes and losses of five-and-thirty years; from Sir Theodore Martin in London, and from Mr Gladstone. "Burns," wrote the last, "a phenomenal man, whose genius all must own, while some lift it to an extraordinary height, and whose

chequered life constitutes in itself a chapter of human 'nature.'

Early in 1888 he was making inquiries of his friend Mr George Seton with regard to the first appearance of the Scottish Thistle in history and the settlement of the Gordons at Kenmure. A protracted "talking pilgrimage" occupied half of April, and its shrines were Arbroath, Seaton-Auchmithie, Forfar, Montrose, Aberdeen, Dundee, and St Andrews. Its most interesting record is of the little fishing-village of Auchmithie. His lecture at Arbroath contributed £30 towards the erection of a recreation-room for the unspeakably poor and neglected fisher-folk, a building which Mrs Gilruth with patient and persistent effort secured at a cost of £200. "We spent yesterday forenoon in a very instructive but not altogether pleasant way, visiting the over-worked and over-burdened generation of fisher-folk here,—so oppressively sad that the æsthetical enjoyment of the picturesque crag scenery is utterly marred by the spectacle." His visit cheered the brave lady, who had no sooner opened her recreation-room than she set about collecting £1000 to qualify Auchmithie for a grant of £3000, wherewith to construct a decent harbour, and that in the very teeth of the local dignitaries. "In knowledge, love,

and joy," she wrote to Mrs Blackie, "he excels all the people I ever met."

At Aberdeen he stayed with friends much beloved, Dr and Mrs Forbes White; and he made a round amongst the old associations, visiting his mother's grave in the West churchyard, and looking up Dr John Forbes, the companion of his Göttingen student days, now an octogenarian. When he returned to Edinburgh, it was to celebrate a Hellenic meeting, of which a note from Dr Flint indicates the subject:—

While you are in the embraces of white-armed Andromache, or gazing with admiration on the work of Hephaistos, I shall be—not poring over dusty books, but—painfully writing certificates. I shall have neither Greek nor song, and will not even enjoy my supper. You will enjoy all three. Too happy mortal!

Mrs Blackie went to Wemyss Bay on May 1 with Mrs D. O. Hill, and he was at home alone winding up his various concerns before the annual visit to London. Amongst these was a collection for a scholarship, which he considered to be of great importance,—to give to the successful student of theology six months' residence in Athens, which would make his acquired academic Greek alive by practice in the modern and living language. He wished to make perpetual what he himself had given as a prize during his pro-



fessoriate. On May 5 he wrote in reference to this :—

My pious begging is now finished, and I ~~am~~ troubled with my besetting sin of self-righteousness. I find nothing to condemn in my procedure, but a great deal to praise. I have by graceful persistency hooked and landed three magnificent fish—the Lord President of the Court of Session, Sir W. Turner, and Principal Sir W. Muir. I have been as busy as a waiter at a junction station when the train waits twenty minutes for dinner.

Two days later he was in London with Dr Wyld and his family. A visitor in the house was Miss Warrack, who had been a member of his Greek class for ladies some years earlier. That class yielded some passable scholars for result, and the best of them were admitted to the Hellenic Society, adding, if not to its erudition, at least greatly to its social interest.

One of his first labours in town was to write in letter-form a sort of manifesto on the Scottish Universities Reform, the Executive Commission for which was being constituted. This spoke his mind on a matter which he had agitated for forty years, and it was printed and distributed to all concerned. He wrote on May 14 :—

The letter arrived after breakfast, and so at 12 P.M. I set out for Westminster, and marching straight to the Scottish Office, Whitehall, I had a pleasant interview with Mr. Cochran Patrick and Mr. Dunbar, both hands to the

Marquis of Lothian, who was not in. Then I had a most delightful lunch with Samuel Smith, the wise man of Liverpool, whom you know; and then I came back and wrote to Gladstone, Chamberlain, Lord Aberdeen, and Goschen, with a copy of the Manifesto.

The most interesting letter of his faithful diary for May is dated the 18th :—

Here events follow in swift sequence. On Wednesday at 2 P.M. I had a very warm friendly time with Browning, who loves me as a brother; I wish his manner was as easy and natural in his books as at his luncheon-table. Present there were only his sister and a Miss Keep, studious of Browning and of Greek, from Northampton. In the evening at 8.30 I found myself in Lord Rosebery's new house with a grand array, or rather a snug select committee, of Gladstonian Liberals, including the G. O. M. himself and his lady; also Lord Aberdeen and his lady; Principal Donaldson, Arnold Morley the Liberal Whip, and a few others. The G. O. M. looked quite well, but discoursed rather too seriously about various matters, Popery and French novels, both unlovely subjects; to which unreasonable seriousness I put a pleasant end in the drawing-room by giving "The Bonnie House o' Airlie," at the express request of Mrs Gladstone and mine host. Yesterday, by appointment, I rattled up to South Hampstead, and found Mary Anderson in all her innocent brightness in a fine old house and garden looking cheerfully down on the far smoke of London. She was not alone, but had a small circle of musical, literary, and artistic people about her, with whom I found it easy to interflow. We had the most wonderful thunder-roll of piano force from a Polish girl named Natalie Janotha. In

the evening, after an early dinner, Grace and I set out for the Princess' Theatre to witness a new play by Hall Caine and Wilson Barrett, who sent us stall tickets,—a romantic drama, full of love and self-sacrifice, and tragic catastrophe.

Mr Hall Caine remembers him "weeping like a little child" at this first performance of "Benma-chree."

He interrupted the stream of gaieties by a visit to Cambridge, where he stayed with Mrs Lewis, seeing both Newnham and Girton, and making the round of colleges and chapels with patient diligence. He presented Miss Helen Gladstone with the four volumes of his 'Homer' for the Newnham Library. Then he returned to London to the social round, attending, too, a meeting of the Scottish Home Rule Association, and forming one of a deputation to Mr Joseph Chamberlain, which that gentleman omitted to receive.

About the middle of June he rejoined his wife, and together they went to Kingussie to spend July and August. The beautiful Spey valley, with its guardian Bens and cradled lochs, was a new field for his inspection. He recorded at this time that he had faithfully kept his vow to see some fresh bit of Scotland every year, and that now half-a-dozen islands of the west and the counties of Forfar and Kincardine alone remained

incompletely explored. At Kingussie he did his best to top the neighbouring heights and to search out the spots sacred to “Charlie and his men” on foot; but the old elasticity was lacking, and climbing was a painful effort. The weather too was bad, July cold and rainy, and August only partially fine. Still he managed to stand on the crest of Cairngorm, of which he wrote in his “Praise of Kingussie” :—

Thither mount with me, and standing  
Where the dun-plumed eagle floats,  
In God’s face who heaved the mountains,  
Bid farewell to petty thoughts !—

Bid farewell to party squabbles,  
Shallow jest, and bitter word;  
Breathe a breath that knows no slander,  
And from free lungs praise the Lord !

A better experience was theirs in September, when they stayed with friends who rented the farmhouse of Laggan above Dulnain Bridge, a house set on a hill and overlooking the valley, where the Spey winds in majestic folds, and beyond which rise the blue mountains in full display. Then the weather was at its finest, and the Professor had pine-woods on either side, where he could walk and meditate. He was gathering together all he knew of Scottish song, seeking into its various sources, and combining

what he learnt into a volume, which was published at the end of the year by Messrs Blackwood & Sons, with the title ‘Scottish Song: its Wealth, Wisdom, and Social Significance.’ It was dedicated to Dr A. C. Mackenzie, who thus wrote in accepting the compliment:—

I appreciate to the full the honour in being associated with one whose life has been devoted to his country’s literature and music. I am eager and anxious that Scotland should take her place among the musical nations, and within the last few years I have been led to believe that this hope will be realised.

To the end of the year 1888 belong his twelve excellent matrimonial maxims, addressed to a young lady about to be married, and printed in the December number of ‘Cassell’s Magazine.’

The new year brought him one of the prostrating colds which so often laid siege to his vigour during the six remaining years, accompanied by a return of weakness in the eyes, and by a depression of spirit to which he gave utterance in the verses “Willing to Depart,” printed later in ‘Life and Work’:—

What make I here with wandering wit,  
Thoughts bound by rope of sand,  
And fancy-fed unpurposed will,  
Blind eye and groping hand?

And memory like a man who sleeps,  
And waking strives in vain  
To fix the motley march of shapes  
That floated through his brain ;

And legs of withe and arms of straw,  
For manful work unfit,  
Where like an old cat by the fire,  
I sit and sit and sit.

O God, O God !—nay, but I will  
Bear bravely to the end ;  
Some good comes mingled with the ill  
In all that He doth send !

Into this shadow came rays of light, in the shape of letters appreciative of his ‘Scottish Song.’

You never forget me [wrote Sir Theodore Martin]. Your new book came to me as a very “sweet remembrancer” of the days of Lang Syne. I have got more than half through the volume, which sets me singing in imagination all the old songs it chronicles, which in former days I used to delight in singing. The heart with you has lost none of its youth under the experience of a long life.

A visit from Mr Minto helped his convalescence ; and a delightful letter from Dr Donner at Helsingfors gave him the gratifying news that ‘Self-Culture,’ “the wonderful little book,” had been translated into Finnish, and was well known amongst the Finns.

When he was better and busy again, Mrs Blackie went to Birkenhead for change and rest. He dined with the neighbours in the “street of saints and sages,” as he called Douglas Crescent, and rendered account of his daily doings. Of January 31 he wrote:—

I dined quietly at home, and at 7.40 proceeded on foot to 5 Wemyss Place, where we had a crowded Hellenic, with no fewer than eight maiden faces and not one clerical! The meeting was very jolly; Gairdner sang a Blackie song, and C. Robertson showed fruits of an accurate scholarship that would have satisfied the most dainty-toothed Oxonian.

Early in February 1889 he was afield on a “talking tramp,” its stages Newcastle, Sunderland, Huddersfield, Birmingham, and Carlisle, the subjects being “Goethe” and “Beauty in Nature and Art.” That he was in full force is proved by a letter from his hostess in Birmingham:—

It is still true [she wrote] that one may entertain angels unawares, for surely it was a heavenly impulse which sent you to us unexpectedly,—by your presence and words of wisdom to give a new and nobler impulse to all those young folk gathered under our roof. Not one of us will ever forget you, and may the snow or the sunshine soon send you this way again.

Mrs Blackie joined him at Carlisle on the homeward journey, and we find him busy all

March and April lecturing in Scotland—on one occasion to a large audience in the Grassmarket of Edinburgh—and corresponding with the Bishop of St Andrews on that recurring problem of the “three orders,” and with the Scotch gardener at Rydal Hall on the substitution of the term *British* for *English* in political and general discourse.

By May 1 he was ready for his six weeks' junketing in the south. On the way to London he read a considerable part of 'Romola.'

It is a wonderful book ; such large reading, such picturing, and such a graceful touch : only I fear I shall never learn to love novels, as there are thousands of things which I see pass before me in the living drama of life which I do not care to reproduce or to see reproduced, however skilfully. I deal with books as with pictures ; the cleverest picture shall have no place on my walls unless the subject be beautiful and the sentiment ennobling.

When he had finished the book he amended his comment.

It is a masterpiece. For historical learning, vivid picturing, eye for character, fine thoughtful feeling, graceful style, and elevating moral, I doubt if it has its superior in the English language.

This verdict, however, lacks one thing, and that the all-important interest in the story.

He was with Mrs Edward Wyld for a fortnight.



His friends Mr and Mrs Archer had been in India for two years, but were on their way home. Scottish Home Rule meetings and conferences claimed part of his time, and he made an effective raid on May 15 “on all the publishers from Covent Garden to the Row.” He scintillated intermittently in the realm of rank, but on the whole contented himself with untitled humanity, whether kith and kin, or poets, artists, and authors. He was aggrieved about his personal appearance. Mrs Blackie had surreptitiously shent his snowy locks, and he lodged his indictment against her as follows :—

A man was he, not made of vulgar stuff,  
Honest and stout and true, but somewhat rough;  
And who a stiff, ungracious crest upreared  
Against fair hands that kindly interfered;  
And so his wife with silent footsteps crept  
One day behind the old dog as he slept,  
And shore these snow-white locks with cunning shears  
Whose loss she now bedews with pious tears.

On May 23 he went to Oxford to pay Principal Fairbairn a visit, and to inspect with great interest the beautiful College reared by dissent and “lifting its head proudly among the oldest academic halls.” He wrote on the 26th :—

Yesterday I went out with mine host to his lecture-room in the town, and heard a most excellent discourse on Herder, Jacobi, Fichte, and all most familiar post-Kantian

expositors of wisdom. Fairbairn is a man for thoroughness of culture and largeness of view, I fancy, not inferior to the most accomplished of the pedagogic dons here and superior to most.

He met many of the local notables, and renewed his acquaintance with Professors Rhys and Sayce. Dining at Jesus College, he met Professor Freeman the historian, Mr Murray the lexicographer, and Mr Bryce.

On his return to London he had occasion to rejoice over a cheque from the editor of the 'Forum,' handsomely remunerating his paper on "Scottish Nationality." He sent a letter to the 'Times' on Subscriptions, called forth by the proceedings of the General Assembly in Scotland, and by its effort to alter into more liberal shape the acceptance of the Westminster Confession. This appeared duly, and met with hearty response.

He left the "magnificent London turmoil" about June 12, and, after three days at Bristol with Dr Nicolson, returned to Edinburgh.

The three summer months were passed at Kirkstead, St Mary's Loch; but in spite of his interest in its associations and scenery, it is doubtful whether he ever found his way into that hidden heart of Yarrow which opens only to a few, and these the intimates of solitude. He missed the

human element, and rejoiced when the coaches brought their load of casual trippers. He appreciated the Selkirk festival on the third Friday of July, when “the lads and lasses” came to St Mary’s Loch to spend the hours in dancing. The day was direful, rain falling in torrents, except for a mid-day respite, when they danced with all their might on the green at Tibbie Shiel’s. “But it did not last half an hour, and they were all forced, like a routed host, to retreat into the small house, within which they swarmed and buzzed after a fearful manner. Some attempts at racing and wrestling took place in the face of the rain, and at intervals I perked about and entered into wise and humorous conversation with the more notable of the pleasure-hunting throng.” On the Sunday after, he was present at the open-air service in St Mary’s churchyard, overhanging the loch, when Mr Borland preached on the righteousness of God’s kingdom, to a crowd of worshippers who had come from far farms and towns,—from Selkirk and Moffat, from Bowerhope and Dryhope and Douglas Burn. The sight set him rhyming, and a long array of stanzas commemorated the day in the ‘People’s Friend.’ He rhymed, indeed, all summer, making mention of what he saw and heard. Perhaps the best of these verses

appeared in ‘Blackwood’s Magazine’ for December that year, ending—

I praise the green huge-shouldered hills,  
The silver-shimmering waters,  
The hill-fed well whose draught brings health  
To Yarrow’s sons and daughters.

And I for love-lorn maids can spare  
A tear of kindred sorrow,—  
But my best thought is glorious John  
At Tibbie Shiel’s in Yarrow.

While at Kirkstead he received from Mr Drummond, jeweller at Stirling, a scarf pin in gold, modelled like the “Wallace sword,” its pommel made of a pearl from the river Forth, in recognition of his “spirit of national patriotism.”

He had been concocting for three years past the rhymed stories and eulogium of the heroes—Jewish, Classic, and Christian—of the old world; apostolic, kingly, and patriotic of the middle ages; and revolutionary, naval, and military of more modern days,—and the proofs were already corrected and about to appear in volume form, when he returned to Douglas Crescent. A week later, the news of his sister’s death summoned him to London. Mrs Ross had spent the last years of her life close to Hampstead Heath, in active and useful membership of Mr Horton’s church, and she passed away on October 8, 1889.

The Professor went to Courtfield Road, attended the funeral, and made a halt of three days at Oxford, on his way home, to see the inauguration of Mansfield College, as Professor Sayce's guest. On October 15, 1889,

at 11.30, in the great Hall of the new Mansfield College, more than 1000 people came together to hear the opening discourse by Principal Fairbairn. It was, as I expected, masterly; solid and interesting in historical matter, elevated in tone, graceful in expression. After the discourse, more than 500 people were entertained at a grand luncheon, at which not only a host of English, Scotch, and foreign D.D.'s, D.C.L.'s, and what not, were present, but Jowett and a great array of the aristocracy of old Oxford.

This breaking down the walls of academic exclusion incited his ready muse, and a note from Dr Fairbairn, dated October 30, acknowledged her inspirations:—

The lines are both fit and beautiful. We are bringing out a memorial volume, and shall place them there, one of the most welcome mementoes of the historical event. We all thank you for so kindly remembering us.

A “talking tour” in Perthshire wound up the year, and in December ‘A Song of Heroes’ was published by Messrs Blackwood & Sons. Perhaps the most valued tribute to its vigour was that from Mr Froude, who read it every word at

a single sitting. "I congratulate you with all my heart," he wrote, "and I congratulate Scotland too. The Scotch strings will still sound the right music if rightly touched."

The years 1890 and 1891 were devoted to a continuous attack on the pedantries and anomalies of the teaching of Greek in England. His arguments were strengthened by a closer acquaintance with the modern literature of Greece, to which he now devoted much of his leisure, collecting the works of his old friend Professor Rangabè, of Bikelas, Satha, Phranzes, Polylas, Koraes, and others. Some of these volumes were sent to him by Greeks; others he bought. He found in them the same tendency to purify the literary language of Greece from its foreign and debasing elements which he had noticed in 1853 in the language spoken by educated Athenians. He found it incontestably proved that modern Greek so purified reverts naturally to the ancient form; and his opinion, dating from the year 1829, when he read Greek in Rome with a young Athenian, and corroborated by every comparison which he made, received constant endorsement in the course of his reading. Even in Oxford such men as Professor Freeman—a righteous free-lance like himself—supported his views.

I wish [the historian had written two years earlier] I could call Oxford the home of any language. It—or at least a majority in it—will have nothing to do with English or any other Teutonic tongue; it jeers at Celtic and Slavonic; it suspends Arabic; it teaches Greek you know how, the Greek of two or three arbitrarily chosen ages, sounded in a hideous fashion, which no Greek of any age could understand. Their ignorance is not that negative darkness which consists in the mere absence of light. It is something positive, Egyptian darkness that may be felt. It is an aggressive contempt for all wider learning.

One result of this reading was the delivery of two addresses to the members of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, one on March 3, 1890, on the “Living Greek Language,” ending with a scheme for reforming the teaching of Greek as a living language; and the other on March 5, on “Adamantios Koraes” and his labours, early in the century, to eject from the written Greek of his time the Turkish, Albanian, and Italian elements which debased it.

To make his conviction of the close relationship between modern Greek so reformed and the language of Homer and Æschylus productive, he proposed that all teaching of Greek should be assisted by the reading of current Greek newspapers and literature, and that a native Greek should superintend conversational classes, as well

as teach the modern history of his country. And finally, he reiterated his appeal to all "patriotic patrons of learning," that they should assist hopeful scholars to reside for at least six months in Athens, and, by attendance at the University classes and use of the current dialect, acquire a living familiarity with Greek, and so restore the scholarship of Scotland. This last proposal was very near to his heart, and he made it practicable by his own assistance and labours in collecting the sum needed for the year, providing for its continuance eventually out of his own resources. His suggestions were warmly encouraged by such men as Professors Rhys and Sayce, and by other members of what may be called the scientific school of philologers, as opposed to the academic or grammarian school; and as the former are preparing the way for future students of language rather than the latter, it may be hoped that Professor Blackie's rank as a pioneer will hereafter be understood and acknowledged.

Connected with his work in this field were an address, which, with a silver cup, the members of the Hellenic Society presented to him on March 15, recording their sense of his great services; and a paper written for the 'Scottish Review' of July, on the visit of Bikelas to Scotland, on which the learned Greek had lectured in Athens. Professor



Blackie's review of this lecture was acknowledged by Bikelas as valuable for its appreciation of his address, and for its expression of opinion on the subject of modern Greek.

Some of his lay-sermons were gathered together early in this year, and published by Mr Douglas as 'Essays on Subjects of Moral and Social Interest.' The chapters were five in number, the two best being that on Scottish Nationality and that on the Philosophy of Education. The most valuable part of the book, however, is contained in the Appendix, in which he recapitulates his views upon the rational teaching of languages, in a dozen characteristic pages. The volume is dedicated to Lord Rosebery, "Statesman, Patriot, and Thinker."

The Professor's freakish humour found a butt that March in the weathercock of the Dean Free Church at the east end of Douglas Crescent. He wrote on the 19th to the Rev. Archibald Bell, the junior pastor of the church:—

MY DEAR SIR,—Your weathercock is the most persistently steadfast character in Edinburgh. Blow the wind as it may, your bird always points to the west. I am willing to subscribe a shilling to any one who will go up and teach the creature to attend to its duty. Steadiness is a great virtue, but pliability has also its place in the temple of the Aretai.

And a few weeks later, in response to a witty vindication of the weathercock's preference for the west wind from Mr Bell, he gave the bird a voice and utterance in the lines :—

Ye weathercocks, ye are a shifty brood,  
Who greet with servile front each wind that blows ;  
I now disown your slippery brotherhood,  
And look one way with steadfast-pointing nose.  
Sunday or Saturday, I invite the west,  
In this dry season of all winds the best.

He was not ready for the south till May 9, and his stay there lasted only a month. Its most vivid records belong to Oxford and Cambridge, where he spent a fortnight. He stayed with Professor and Mrs Rhys at Oxford, and lectured on the 15th at the Taylor Institution.

The Pro. mounted the platform and marched bravely into the front of ancient prejudice with the cry, Linguistic Reform, Nature, and Life, instead of dead grammar and dry rules! There was a good audience, but few dons: Murray, the great philologer, sitting with mild dignity in the front bench under the nose of the lecturer; Fairbairn also, and Gardner, Professor of Archæology. After the lecture, which lasted an hour, we proceeded to Jesus College, where the Welsh do congregate, and sat down to a large dinner-party of eighteen. On Saturday the most agreeable incident was having the celebrated Herkomer, the artist, to lunch with us. He is a tall, dark man, more like a grand Italian captain of brigands than a German; and indeed he assures us that, as a South Bavarian, his

blood is from Rome, just as in Dacia, and his name signifies, Herkomer, the stranger, the man that comes hither from a foreign country. I had the good fortune to find Murray in his *scriptorium*, a word borrowed from the monkish establishments of the middle ages, which had a special chamber for the copying of old MSS. My friend's *scriptorium* is a sort of tent with solid roofing, where his philological reports from local contributors are piled up in learned order on the shelves, while a body of working clerks, some nine or ten, sit with pen in hand below at the table sifting the papers and arranging the results in alphabetical order.

The Cambridge visit was to Mr and Mrs Lewis, with whom he corresponded in Greek. On May 23 his hosts held a drawing-room meeting, at which he expounded his views on “living Greek” to a select gathering of dons and philologists, amongst them Sir T. Wade, Sir G. Stokes, and Professor Skeat. His suggestions were received with far greater cordiality than at the sister University.

After a fortnight of the London season, with some talking on Goethe for the Goethe Society thrown in, he was glad to escape to Crieff in Perthshire, where a cottage was already tenanted by Mrs Blackie for the summer. Pleasant neighbours—amongst whom was Miss Gordon Cumming—and old Jacobite houses made the months

interesting; but late in August he fled first to Mull and then to Strathspey, where he spent a glorious fortnight, singing Scotch songs with Madame Annie Grey, a fellow-guest at Laggan. A visit, too, was paid to Mr M'Pherson at Kingussie, a friend well versed in Highland lore, who helped him with his topographical researches up the Spey.

An article on the "Christianity of the Future" appeared in the September 'Forum.' His mornings in London had been occupied with its composition, reviewing the many retrograde "isms" pretending to be Christianity, but false to the great forward movement preached and purposed by our Lord.

Three fruits of his preoccupation with modern Greek matured in 1891 — his 'Greek Primer,' colloquial and constructive; his effort to bring about the Greek Travelling Scholarship; and a plan to revisit Greece, although this last was in its very realisation made futile by illness.

Early in the year he was much interested in the 'Times' correspondence on compulsory Greek and the teaching of Greek, and contributed to the correspondence, which filled columns of that journal from many authoritative quarters. But his chief labour was the excellent little 'Greek Primer,'

published by Messrs Macmillan, and forming a grammatical supplement to his ‘Dialogues in Greek and English,’ printed for his students a score of years before. This Primer was based upon the opinions which underlay the earlier work, and which his growing intimacy with modern Greek had quickened into principles. In the Preface we recognise these, freshened and fortified by his immediate study; and although he asked the assistance of academic Grecians in revising the proofs, it is characteristic that he acknowledges their proffered corrections without using them. The book once out of his hands, he left it to his publishers, and set about collecting introductions for his visits to Constantinople and Athens. The farther destination was suggested by an excursion voyage undertaken in the April of that year by the R.M. steamer Chimborazo, which made the tour of the Mediterranean, touching at many historical points, and eventually finding its way to Stamboul in time for the great festival. He secured a sheaf of excellent credentials, set about reading Greek journals of the day, left on March 30, 1891, for London, and embarked on April 1. He found in the steamer a goodly company of fellow-passengers, with many of whom he made terms of comradeship. The Bay of Biscay was

not in genial mood, and for a few days he half regretted his octogenarian enterprise; but no storm occurred, and when it was once headed into the Mediterranean, the steamer became a pleasant home. He attached himself particularly to Mr and Miss Cochrane from Galashiels, the lady winning his heart by her sympathetic patriotism. They reached Tangier on April 7, and Palermo three days later. Commander Hull—"the genial and jolly Tom Hull" the Professor called him in his letters—provided entertainment and instruction for the party, lecturing on the classic associations of every stage, and having to submit to much correction and reproof from his lively critic. At Palermo a halt was called for inspection of the beautiful city. Here the Professor summoned up all the Italian that remained to him, and talked to every man he met, greatly disconcerting the natives by his Scotch accent, and needing to help out his sentiments with gesticulation. An old man and a little girl attracted him, and after an attempt to talk to them, he filled the child's hand with coins, a language well "understanded," and which roused in the young face a rapturous wonder, as if a saint had appeared from the other world, with unaccustomed words and ways, but with celestial gifts and kindness.

The most interesting stage was the Bay of Nauplia. Here is his description, written on April 17 :—

· By the grace of Commander Hull, fifty or sixty of us were deposited in Greek cabs of rotten and ragged description, fifteen in number, and rattled over the low ground at the head of the loch at a tremendous pace. Six miles of this brought us to Argos, towering up as high as Arthur's Seat. We halted there, but as there was nothing but the graded seats of an old theatre to gaze on, we buckled ourselves stoutly for the achievement of the day. This was Mycenæ, the castled steep where once the king of men in his grandeur and glory resided, looking like a god southward over the array of mountains spotted with townships, where his lordship was recognised. This heroic citadel lies on a height of some four or five hundred feet, and though no traces of a city now exist, there are two notable monuments that, next to the colossal piles on the Nile, give the most vivid idea of the massiveness of ancient architecture—the tomb, or treasury, of Agamemnon, or both. In front of the entrance there is a long alley strongly fenced with square stones on both sides, and here ! we all sat down, a various array of grey heads and gay damsels, and refreshed ourselves with a luncheon bountifully spread for us by the kindness of the captain, who honoured us by the blandness and benignity of his personal presence. Wine of course in this country was not wanting, and so the spirit moved me to stand up at the head of the banqueters and propose in good Greek a bumper to the memory of the king of men, which, of course, was responded to loudly with Ζήτω, Ζήτω, Ζήτω. After this pious recall of the Greek head of this region, we mounted up the hill about half a mile farther to

another gigantic enclosure, supposed by Schliemann, I am told, to be the tomb of Clytemnestra.

Constantinople was reached on the 21st, three days having been given to Athens. He was a fortnight in the Turkish capital, partly with his fellow-voyagers, and largely with the gentlemen to whom he brought letters, and with old students who cropped up wherever Scotchmen clustered. Indeed, he was passed from house to house, from banquet to banquet, from spectacle to spectacle. He went to the mosques and tombs in due succession, the slippers with which he was provided sorely incommoding him, as his vigorous movements kicked them off in the most awkward places, and some member of the party was always at his heels with the derelicts. He was not prepossessed with the Turks. He went to the Yildiz Kiosk to see the Sultan set out on his ceremonial visitation of the old mosques. There was the usual show and glitter of military costumes and appurtenance, and he was heard to mutter, "God, who sitteth in His heaven, shall laugh."

At the end of the fortnight he took steamer for Athens, and two days brought him thither. He was invited by Mr and Mrs Ernest Gardner to stay with them at the British Archæological School, and he looked forward to this visit with ardour, hoping to see and learn much, and to



work at modern Greek. But his banquetings at Constantinople sent in their direful bill, in the shape of a sudden prostrating malady, which at first looked like a fever, but proved to be merely a very violent recurrence of a constitutional ailment. He spent his time in bed, and only got well enough to return home. It was a happy coincidence for him that Dr Porter was at Athens with a patient, and that he was able and willing to take charge of the Professor not only there, but as far as Switzerland homeward. He left Lucerne for London on May 25, and for Edinburgh after a few days' rest in town.

Mrs Blackie had taken the Glebe farmhouse at Boat of Garten for the summer, and the Spey valley restored to him a measure of strength, whose precariousness he hardly appreciated. He was no sooner there than he reverted to work. Unqualified repose only depressed him. “My Father worketh hitherto, and I work,” was a favourite text often quoted. He wrote out his recollections of Palermo and Constantinople for the ‘People’s Friend’; he completed his collection for the Greek Travelling Scholarship; he explored the course of the river Spey; he paid many visits to neighbours—to Mr and Mrs Findlay at Aberlour, to Mr Carnegie at Cluny, where he met Mr John Morley, and to Dr Martineau

at Rothiemurchus. A letter from the last, dated September 12, contains so interesting a passage that it must be quoted :—

Many thanks for the ‘Acropolis.’ The last time I handled a Greek newspaper was in the summer of 1824, within two or three months of Byron’s death at Missolonghi. Calling on Mrs Barbauld at Newington Green, I found her on her feet just taking leave of two visitors, who had brought her some message from Byron, and lingered for a few more last words. When they were gone, she asked me if I knew who they were. I was sure only that they were people of mark. They were Samuel Rogers and Sir James Mackintosh. They had brought a bundle of Greek newspapers sent by Byron just before his death in the preceding April. Mrs B. said, “They are a touching memorial; but I cannot read them: you would like perhaps to look into their contents; take them, and tell me what you find.” I retain a strong impression of my interest in studying them, but cannot remember how I returned them to the dear old lady. For I never saw her again; and I think her death occurred within a year. I was still a student at college. Were I now at the same age, I should be tempted to conform to the Church of Scotland in the hope of meriting an appointment to your Greek Theological Scholarship.

That appointment was secured in the autumn to Mr Andrew Brown, highly commended by the Professors in St Andrews.

The Professor was very happy at Boat of Garten, loving its birch-wood solitudes and its bits of old forest in which Arthur and his knights

might have ridden. At morning prayers a favourite paraphrase was “O God of Bethel”; but he would not conform to the text of its third line, and it was always sung—

“Who through this *pleasant* pilgrimage.”

A note on September 16 records this revised version.

Early in October he was present at the celebrations of the Glenalmond Jubilee, meeting Mr and Mrs Gladstone amongst the Headmaster’s guests. A brief lecturing season in London and an article in the December number of the ‘Nineteenth Century,’ on the translation of “Hamlet” into modern Greek by Polylas, wound up his activities for 1891.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## CLOSING YEARS.

1892-1895.

THE home in Douglas Crescent had been brightened since 1890 by the presence of the Professor's nephew, Dr Stodart Walker, who filled the place of a son. But the winter began and continued with sickness and sorrow. First Mrs Blackie succumbed to influenza, then the Professor, and lastly Dr Walker.

There is a plague in the air delighting to walk in darkness [he wrote towards the end of 1891], and laying our stalwart men prostrate with a touch. It wears an Italian name, influenza, but seemingly puts forth its full vigour in a Scottish climate. Our breezy crescent here with its large outlook has not escaped the infection; my dear wife lies chained to her bed in the warm room close to the dining-room, and being under medical direction, can allow herself no freedom, as symptoms of pleuro-pneumonia have revealed themselves, which require to be carefully

watched and wisely tended. As for myself, I have hitherto escaped the grasp of the fiend, for which God be thanked, and am jumping about in my usual style from east to west and from west to east, preaching the catholic gospel of philosophy, piety, poetry, and patriotism. I have sent out my first holder of the Greek Travelling Scholarship to Athens. I am happy to find my views on the study of Greek as a living language advocated by influential men in high quarters.

This letter and one immediately following were enclosed in envelopes distinguished by a Greek motto in the left-hand corner, more rarely used than the *Ἀληθείων ἐν ἀγάπῃ* known to all his correspondents. This was *Χαλεπὰ τὰ χαλὰ*, "All best things are difficult," and was meant as a note of cheer to the receiver, who had begun the long task of chronicling his life.

He was getting frequent letters from Mr Andrew Brown, culminating in a series written in modern Greek. Before his turn of influenza came, he wrote his "Confession of Faith" for the 'Scotsman' of January 22 :—

Creeds and confessions ! High Church or the Low ?

I cannot say ; but you would vastly please us  
If with some pointed Scripture you could show  
To which of these belonged the Saviour Jesus.

I think to all or none ; not curious creeds

Or ordered forms of churchly rule He taught,  
But soul of love that blossomed into deeds,

With human good and human blessing fraught.

On me nor Priest, nor Presbyter, nor Pope,  
Bishop, or Dean may stamp a party name ;  
But Jesus, with His largely human scope,  
The service of my human life may claim.  
Let prideful priests do battle about creeds,  
The Church is mine that does most Christ-like deeds.

It is notable how, in the last years, Goethe, Aristotle, John Knox, even the Psalmist and St Paul, became less the authorities to quote, and Christ grew more and more. "Let him look in the face of Jesus Christ" was his constant comment concerning a man's character. It became the test for all kinds of conduct—in the world of politics, of business, of social life, just as much as in the world of "creeds and confessions." Both in his letters and in his talk he confessed the Lord Jesus Christ, as he had never openly done before, potent as was Christ's influence in moulding his character. And so these closing years were marked by a gentleness, tenderness, and forbearance quite distinguishable from the "equipoise" of earlier attainment.

In February, while his wife still lingered in protracted weakness,—intensified by insomnia,—the plague seized the Professor in the form of a lowering cold and cough, which put an end to the lecturing "from east to west" for that spring.

Towards the end of the month he was still

enfeebled, and so depressed by the long sojourn indoors that he would not confess he was mending. But a few days later Mrs Blackie wrote : "I am glad to tell you that Pro. is every day improving in strength. He does look older, and he is feebler in walking, but his wonderful power of quiet sleeping helps him."

The interviewers were upon him this year, and the first of their illustrated casual chronicles appeared in the 'Strand Magazine' for March. It is doubtless the brightest, most spontaneous, and most sympathetic of many, and both Professor and Mrs Blackie entertained a pleasant recollection of its genial and considerate writer, Mr Harry How. It brought in its train an outbreak of requests for autographs hard to satisfy.

The turn of the tide was passed by the beginning of March, and life began to flow with accustomed pulse. On the 12th the Professor was in full cry after "Living Greek" and the Travelling Scholarship. A letter to the 'Scotsman' appeared that morning on the place of Greek in Scotland,—"a noble one, wise, patriotic, and statesmanlike," wrote Dr Donald Macleod. His fervour stormed the tardiness of the Scottish Church, and the General Assembly of the year was petitioned to secure a fund for the maintenance of the scholar-

ship. In 1891 it had been brought for the first time to the notice of the Assembly, and received a ready sanction on condition that the founder should himself raise the funds. That had been done for the year, and the experiment was made with unqualified success. On May 29, 1892, Dr Scott read that part of the Report which dealt with this experiment :—

It had been found that £100 of bursary provided fairly well for six months' living and study in the heart of what was most interesting in Greece, and by study and practice of the living tongue would enable the successful student to gain a hold of the language of the New Testament and of one great section of the Early Christian Fathers, which no ordinary University curriculum at home could possibly give. The Committee accordingly suggested to the Assembly to commend it afresh to the attention of devout and intelligent persons, who had it in their power to provide for the continuance of the experiment, or give permanence to the scholarship by the method of endowment.

Professor Blackie, who met with an enthusiastic reception, then addressed the Assembly on the value of the scholarship to Greek in Scotland and to theology. On this latter point he was well qualified to speak, for since his boyhood, and the memorable interview with Dr Forbes of Old Machar, he had never spent a day without reading, translating, and pondering



a passage from the Greek Testament. He had worn out many an interleaved Testament in one volume or two, and many a tiny copy, which he kept in his pocket when travelling ; and he was justified in asserting that he knew the Greek Testament as well as any man alive. The proceedings ended with a vote of thanks for his great services in so successfully commencing the movement.

A month earlier he had read a paper to the members of the Royal Society of Edinburgh on the "Development of Modern Greek," and his correspondence afterwards shows its acceptance by Greeks both in England and Athens.

The event most interesting on the domestic side of his life in the month of April was his Golden Wedding, duly celebrated on the 19th. Neither he nor Mrs Blackie was strong enough to take a leading share in the reception, but they sat side by side in the drawing-room, and the two nephews, who were as their sons, and the wife and children of one of these, contributed the active element of the home circle.

It was a bright sunny day [wrote Mrs Blackie], and the rooms looked their best, filled with the lovely colouring and scent of countless flowers. Had it not been Easter time, when so many go out of town, there would have been a crowd ; as it was there was room to move about.

Alec, Matilda, Grace, and Archie represented Pro.'s family. We had tea, coffee, wedding-cake, and champagne. Augusta poured out tea, and Agnes Smith did much to allow me to remain up-stairs. Every one was nicely dressed, and they beamed on us. I felt peaceful and happy. Pro. condescended to wear his best clothes, but as soon as every one had gone, he disappeared and resumed his dressing-gown and straw hat, and seemed to breathe more freely. We dined alone, the Alecs and Archie and ourselves.

Flowers, gifts, telegrams poured in all day. Early in the afternoon the members of the Hellenic Society arrived bearing a beautiful offering in the form of a great silver bowl, of the time of George III., finely chased, and inscribed on a shield with the initials of the wedded pair, the date, and "From the Hellenic Society." It was accompanied by a congratulatory address in Greek, and by a poem written for the day by Dr Walter C. Smith:—

“ With silken locks of silver hair,  
    He keeps a heart for ever young ;  
And underneath her graver air  
    There dwells a spirit pure and fair,  
    With thoughts high-soaring and high-strung.

Light may the years upon you lie,  
    Light fall their footprints on you still ;  
And long may ye go on to ply  
    The generous youth with wisdom high,  
    A noble manhood to fulfil.

And as the days that lie behind,  
Whether in shadow or in sun,  
So may the rest but closer bind  
Both heart to heart, and mind to mind,  
Until ye perfect be in one.

And may fond memories of the past,  
Sweet as the scent of clover-field,  
Hover around you to the last ;  
While higher, holier hopes forecast  
What the great future yet shall yield."

After this presentation a committee representing three hundred fellow-townsmen and old friends offered, through the Rev. Dr MacGregor of St Cuthbert's, the hearty congratulations of the larger community to one

of the most widely known and best beloved of living Scotchmen, and to the loving and noble wife under whose guidance he had reached that position. The other causes could be found in his splendid and various natural powers, his extensive scholarship, his great industry, his warm-hearted patriotism—an intense love of Scotland and all that is Scottish,—and to what they knew lay at the very root of his being—the love of righteousness and the fear of God.

This warm greeting was coupled with the hope that Professor Blackie would sit forthwith to Sir George Reid for a

living presentment of the man, as in his eighty-third year, hale, hearty, erect, he walked the streets of Edin-

burgh, its most familiar citizen,—the fine chiselled face, the intellectual head, the white hair, the hat and plaid,—and the walking-stick too.

The portrait of the man whom Scotland knew best as Sir George Reid has represented him was soon after begun, and in January 1893 it was finished and presented to Professor and Mrs Blackie for the term of their lives, and destined ultimately for the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. An etching by Mr Huth represents it as frontispiece to this biography. When the picture itself appeared in London in the spring of 1893, it drew constant delighted recognition, and was rarely without a little crowd of on-lookers.

Sir George Newnes was the recipient in May of a letter from Scotchmen in Surinam giving expression to their enjoyment of Mr Harry How's "Interview" in the 'Strand Magazine.'

I tell you [wrote Mr J. S. Blake in their name] that the account of this interview has brought tears to the eyes of many of us who have not seen him for quarter of a century—tears of joy that he is hale and healthy, and that the old ringing tones and kindly words are still to the fore. The only objection we have against the report is that it is far too short. Some of us could almost punch Mr Harry How's head for not going further and filling up the whole magazine, and this I am sure will be the verdict of Scotchmen throughout the world.

No wonder that the object of such love grew strong with the summer months; he slept peacefully at night, and awoke refreshed and fit for many things. Amongst them was a Scottish Home Rule pamphlet called 'The Union of 1707 and its Results,' written in May and published early in June. He wrote, too, a paper on John Knox for the August 'Contemporary,' the backbone of which was a string of sonnets. His share in the Scottish Home Rule agitation was undoubtedly moved by a spurt of vivid imagination, hardly backed up by careful inquiry into the real conditions of the question. A touch of romance belongs to all fervid patriotism, and while reform is an apparent necessity, he did not stop to inquire what dangers might beset the plan of reform which he advocated. But who can wonder that he revolted against the strange insensibility of Scottish society to the worth of the Scottish character and history, and longed to restore to the scene of such heroic traditions an outward and visible dignity which should recover the respect of all.

He spent some days of July in Covenanted counties, Ayrshire and Dumfriesshire, helping to inaugurate Peden's monument at Cumnock. London was given up this year, as he and Mrs Blackie left Edinburgh for Strathspey somewhat earlier

than usual. They rented a house in Kingussie for the three summer months. There, on July 28, 1892, his eighty-third birthday, Highland honours were paid to the veteran champion of the Highlanders. He had celebrated the occasion quietly at home with a luncheon-party of old friends, who gave him words of love and cheer,—and he had read to them a poem on “Old Age,” in which his glad acceptance of failing strength and fuller wisdom was expressed. He was thinking of bed, when, about 9.30, he was summoned by a deputation preceded by the piper of the Kingussie volunteers. On a hill near the town blazed a great bonfire in his honour, and when he appeared at the foot, he was seized and carried up shoulder-high by some stalwart townsmen, in spite of his protest that his own legs were still in good condition. He was set down in the midst of a large gathering. The Chief Magistrate, Mr Macpherson, in the name of all, offered him congratulations on his genial old age, and the place rang with genuine Highland cheers. The Professor in his thanks alluded to the glorious record of Highland courage, and to the infinitely greater value of the men who won victories for England than of those whose main object it was to make homes desolate that grouse and deer might accumulate for sport. The chair in which

he sat was then tossed into the flames, and he was permitted to walk home escorted by his friends and preceded by the piper.

Other tributes followed—a tartan plaid specially blended for him, and a book dedicated to him by Mr Andrew Brown, who, lecturing at Montrose, had reminded his hearers that the modern Greeks were devoted to our great Phil-Hellenes past and present, and that names beloved amongst them were Byron, Gladstone, and Blackie.

The weather in August was wretched, and thwarted intended excursions; but he found compensation in Kingussie itself, where many of his friends had pitched their summer tents. He made out a visit to Laggan Manse, sacred to the memory of Mrs Grant of Laggan; and half-way through September he went to Aberlour, to follow the Spey to its mouth with his friend Mr Findlay.

Early in October he was at home again, and was mapping out his work for the winter. Sitings to Sir George Reid were frequent, and lectures in the north of England and in Edinburgh itself filled the first weeks of November. The best of these was a Sunday evening address on “Beauty in Art and Religion,” given in the Synod Hall to an audience of 3000 people, under the auspices of Dr MacGregor, who in-

troduced him as "the most famous of living Scotchmen."

Lord Tennyson's death was a shock to him, as Robert Browning's had been three years before. These men were his contemporaries, and he bowed his head in recognition that their funeral knell bade him "put his house in order." There was little to put in order in a life spent as was his, but something of the solemnity of expectation came upon him, and he often spoke of death from this time,—as coming and that soon. He spoke without regret and without the old recoil, and he looked forward to the better life continued beyond what we call death.

There can be no doubt [he wrote to Miss Pipe] that the belief in a historical Christ and a historical resurrection is the only basis on which a living certainty of life beyond the grave can be placed.

But he was not hindered in doing present work by the increasing urgency of this consideration. "The devout mind," he continued, "may find perfect satisfaction in living for ever with God on this, or on the other side of the grave." He understood that eternal life is the life with God now as well as after.

On Sunday forenoons he was busy with a study of the character of King David, to take the first place in a book published at the end of 1893, and



called 'Christianity and the Ideal of Humanity.' The writer spent that winter with him and Mrs Blackie, and listened to much talk on serious matters. He was more at home than usual, warned by chills which the bad weather of autumn had induced. He spent a great part of every evening in the drawing-room, supplementing his library catalogue and talking about his collection of modern Greek books. About nine o'clock he would produce the backgammon-board for the customary "rattle," and then the old vivacity would flash out, and he would stoutly assert the male superiority in all games where skill backs chance. Sometimes Mrs Blackie won a game, and then he lamented his defeat as if he had risked and lost the credit of all manhood. "What! let the hen beat you, Johnnie—for shame! for shame!" He was more patient with his guest, whom he beat with small ado. It was the immortal boyishness in his nature which took these freakish forms, for no man ever valued the feminine in humanity more, or more clearly recognised its divine function of helpfulness to men.

In the gospels [he wrote about this time] women stand prominently as the most loyal followers of Him whose sad honour it was to have been slandered by the Scribes and crucified by the priests of the age. And in the range of apostolic preaching that followed after the

resurrection, in learned Athens we find that, while stern Stoics and light Epicureans combined to meet the great Apostle with a rude "What will this babbler say?" a woman named Damaris, following in the track of a judge in the court of the Arcopagus, gave her name as a member of the infant Christian Church in Athens; and from this small seed, under divine Providence, there grew up a mighty tree to which, after the lapse of nearly two thousand years, was reserved the honour of freeing the most intellectual centre of South-Eastern Europe from the desolating tyranny of the Turks.

All women who knew him acknowledged his enlarging and ennobling influence, and were the stronger, the sweeter, and the purer that he expected great things from them.

On November the 24th there was a Hellenic meeting to read the first part of 'Agamemnon'; and Professor Charteris, Dr Walter C. Smith, Sheriff Nicolson, Dr Hutchison Stirling, Mr Charles Robertson, and many others were present. Only two lady members, Miss Urquhart and Miss Stirling, took part. The rites followed their prescribed course—the reading, supper, toasts of the *Hierophant* and the *Despoina*, and songs from the Professor and Sheriff Nicolson. The latter sang his beautiful "Skye Song," almost for the last time, for not many weeks after death gently summoned him.

The year was wound up with a paper on "Love,

Courtship, and Marriage," for 'Work and Progress,' and another on "How to Learn a Language," for the 'Academic Review.' The new year ushered in its quota of pleasant incidents, amongst them a visit to Dr Forbes White, to inaugurate the Homeric Club of Dundee at that gentleman's house. He busied himself, too, with dispensing New Year's gifts in a fashion of his own. Each had its special dedication and character, and was wrapped in its own consecrating myth. Thus he laid before the writer, still a guest at 9 Douglas Crescent, a packet inscribed by angels in the Greek of Paradise, who appeared to him in a wakeful hour of the night, and intrusted him with the gift. It contained £5 in an inner envelope, which bore the lines:—

Money, which burns the fingers of a fool  
 Who blindly blunders,  
 Is to the knowing hand a ready tool  
 Which works great wonders.

And the angelic Greek outside ran thus:—

Τῇ σεβαστῇ παρθένῳ  
 Ἄννα Κρατερόφρονι,  
 οἱ, ἐν τῷ ὑψίστῳ οὐρανῷ,  
 ἄγγελοι εὖ πράττειν.

When he sent books to his friends, each bore a definite inscription, recording some characteristic or recalling some association connected with the

friend whom it addressed. Indeed he carried this habit to the height of an art, no single inscription resembling another, even of many offered to the same person, and yet each having its special meaning for the recipient. The presentation of the Golden Wedding picture belonged to January, as well as work at the papers of which his last book was compiled. He was corresponding with theological friends on the accurate reading of certain passages in St Peter's epistles, one of which he prefixed as motto to the chapter on "St Paul and the Epistle to the Romans."

About the middle of April the long rest from lecturing had sufficiently renewed his strength to enable him to go South for three weeks. He had a carriage to himself nearly all the way to King's Cross, and relieved his solitude by singing Scottish songs. He spent the first week with Dr and Mrs Kennedy at Hampstead, but was not able for the usual whirl of engagements. He made some calls, spoke at a Scottish Home Rule meeting, and lunched with Mr Barrie, whom he liked. Short visits to Oxford and Cambridge on the business of his "Living Greek" propaganda, with gratifying response at the more open-minded University, wound up his holiday, and he returned to Edinburgh in time for the General Assembly's deliberations on the Greek Travelling

Scholarship. The minutes record this year's resolution:—

The General Assembly cordially thank Professor Blackie for the renewed indication of his warm interest in the Scholarship which bears his name; approve of the suggestion that, with his consent, its scope should be widened so as to embrace Greek and Bible lands; and authorise Professor Cowan and Dr Nicol, with the assistance of such others as they may associate with them, to take charge of the matter and to make an appeal on its behalf to the sympathy and support of friends of the Church desirous of furthering the interests of Biblical scholarship among her students.

This proposal of a wider scholarship included Arabic and acquaintance with both Palestine and Egypt, to supplement for the study of the Old what Professor Blackie desired to do for that of the New Testament, and suggested Athens and Beyrout as two centres of residence. An appeal was drafted and distributed by the Sub-Committee to make the aim of the Scholarship widely known, and it met with response sufficiently liberal to enable the General Assembly of 1894 to sanction a competition held in September. The Scholarship was gained by Mr John Duncan, M.A., a graduate (with honours in Classics) of Aberdeen and a Divinity student, who received £150 on condition of spending three months in Greece and six months in countries where Arabic

is spoken. This he did, spending two months in Egypt, where he assisted in some of Dr. Flinders Petrie's excavations.

Professor and Mrs Blackie took a cottage on the heights above Pitlochry for the summer months, going to it on July 1, 1893. He was "well and serene," but found the climb to and from Pitlochry rather too tiring for daily effort; and although the spell of Ben Vrackie was always on him, he missed the friendly neighbours and gossip of Kingussie. On his eighty-fourth birthday Pitlochry did him Highland honour, with bonfire, dancing, and speeches on the knoll before his cottage; and he enjoyed the crowd and its kindly acclamations. During the last weeks of their stay at Balghoulan, a valued friend of later years was their neighbour, Miss Molyneux of Tom-na-monachan, and she brightened the solitude which oppressed him in July. For except in his study and in the long walks of more vigorous years, when companionship rather fretted than pleased him, he loved to be surrounded by human faces, and delighted in the glimpses of character which they revealed. The glorious summer compensated partly for the isolation of their quarters, and they could sit out of doors or wander about in peace. A visit to Mrs Glassford Bell at Tirinie, near Aberfeldy, plunged him into the lively social

atmosphere which he liked, and recruited by rest he managed to get half-way up Schiehallion, although with difficulty. He was waylaid by a party of climbers, with whom he lunched, and then descended.

It was not wise, however, and he returned to Balghoulan badly colded and enfeebled. The Highlands sent him back to the study of Gaelic, which he pursued in Edinburgh on his return, weaving his reading and observations into a short bright article for 'Blackwood's Magazine,' called "Glimpses of Church and Social Life in the Highlands in Olden Times." Other researches of the summer led to a paper on "Place-names" accepted by Dr Macleod for the November 'Good Words.'

He was very far from well during the late autumn, but revived for "talking tramps," which lasted intermittently the whole winter. No persuasion would induce him to give these up, although he returned from them white and chilled and numb, sometimes too fatigued to speak. An interest of the year's close was his book, 'Christianity and the Ideal of Humanity.' The copy which he sent to the writer bears this inscription besides her name, "With the hope that she may recognise in this book the ethical ideal on which one of the oldest of her dear

father's friends has now for more than sixty years humbly endeavoured to frame his mortal life."

This little volume, published by Mr David Douglas, contains six chapters—on David, King of Israel; on Christian Unity; on Wisdom; on Women, from which the closing sentences have already been quoted; on St Paul and the Epistle to the Romans; and on the Scottish Covenanters.

The chapter on Women contains his suggestions for their perfect development as women, in obedience to God's intention for them, and should be read by all.

Letters, gratefully acknowledging his services to his country and to individuals, abound bearing this winter's date: he was a prophet who received abundant honour from his own people.

An extract from a letter dated Aberdeen, 15th January 1894, shows that he began the new year with a revival of strength and energy. He lectured there with much acceptance on Tuesday the 16th, his subject being "Education and the Age," and spent some days with Dr and Mrs M'Clymont at 5 Queen's Gardens:—

Yesterday I went twice to church; in the forenoon to the College, where I marched in as part of the academical square caps, and had my seat on the left hand of the Principal accordingly. The preacher was Principal Fair-



bairn of the Dissenters' College, Oxford, who preached most excellently on the moral conquest of the world by Christ's army. After service I lunched with Professor Cowan, one of the best of my old students, and then drove back to the extreme west end of Aberdeen. In the evening we had a sermon specially addressed to the young men of the Association by Mr Ranken of Irvine, a discourse combining large human sympathies with special Christian grace and a broad sweep of social wisdom.

On the 15th he

lunched with Sir Principal Geddes and a few of his learned colleagues, besides some female wanderers. The Principal was bland and gracious, and the lady comported herself in every way worthy of a sister of John Forbes White. After food and talk, we drove over to Marischal College and heard Dr Fairbairn, as Gifford Lecturer, deliver an interesting and thoroughly learned lecture on Buddhism. We then came home, and at dinner had the same intelligent Dissenter in a more familiar presentation. He is really one of the largest-minded men that I have ever met. We were very jovial and hearty, and the Pro., by special entreaty, sang no less than three songs,—“Jenny Geddes,” “Sam Sumph,” and the “Bonnie House o’ Airlie.”

When he returned to Edinburgh he found awaiting him a letter from Professor Angelo Scuppa of Norcia, asking permission to translate ‘Self - Culture’ into Italian. This, as well as several requests from students in different parts of India, who desired to add it to the literature of their various vernaculars, closed the list of

such proposals during his lifetime. Professor Scuppa completed the task in time to send him copies before Christmas; and one of the latest occupations of 1894 was the slow penning of inscriptions in these copies for the few friends to whom he sent them. His wife received the first, and the writer was one of those to whom this version of 'Self-Culture' was his last gift.

Many good books you have written [wrote Dr Flint on January 30], and many good works you have done, and all men love you well and wish you well.

And about the same time Mr Webster of the University Library acknowledged his photograph in loving words:—

You are, by the grace of God, one of the joy-makers of the world. I have often wished to let you know the gratitude (and yet that is not the word) which I have felt towards you since I was one of your boys.

There was too much "going to and fro" that winter, and on February 20 Mrs Blackie wrote: "Pro. is sleeping badly, and looking fagged." Quick recovery had always characterised his constitution, and he was slow to understand that the spirit to do things did not include the strength sufficient, so that we find him lecturing in March and even in April, and writing long and vigorous letters to the 'Scotsman' on two

subjects—Disestablishment and the Greek Travelling Scholarship. On the former he appealed to his old test, Aristotle's golden mean, as opposed to the declaration of war against the Scottish Established Church, "which has become the stamp of national independence, and stands erect on its own base as free from any interference on the part of the State as in the days of the Apostle Paul and the early Fathers." This letter appeared on March 21, and was evoked by a point in Lord Rosebery's speech in the Corn Exchange a few days earlier. With all the other points in that speech he was in sympathy, but he deprecated assault on the National Church of Scotland.

In April Mrs Blackie fell ill. Her malady meant great suffering. One Sunday, the first in May, he was standing at the foot of her bed while a prolonged spasm of acute pain seized her, and his grief and pity brought on him an attack of cardiac asthma. His wife saw him suddenly beating the air with his hands to recover breath. It was the first step of the ten months' decline, and was followed by another attack three days later. Dr Foulis kept him in his bedroom and called to see him twice a-day, and he recovered by the end of the week, although

much enfeebled and depressed. Dr George Balfour was consulted, and gave it as his opinion that the heart was overtaxed, and that there must be no more lecturing nor public speaking. It was a case of "senile heart," and the least exertion might bring back the asthma. For the first time his wife could not be with him to tend him as she alone knew how to do, and this retarded her recovery, although she was kept in ignorance of the gravity of his attacks. But his nephew, Dr Stodart Walker, saw all instructions as to diet and rest carefully carried out; and he was nursed by the affectionate maid-servants who had for many years been valued members of his household, and who considered themselves neither day nor night when his comfort was in question. "We're awfu' attached to the maister," said one of them, and they showed their attachment by unwearied and most unselfish tendance. By May 29 he was so far well as to come down to breakfast and to read prayers. Mrs Blackie was getting better too, and together the two invalids took a daily drive for an hour at most.

The writer was in Edinburgh about the middle of June, and dined one Sunday at 9 Douglas Crescent. A great change had come over the

alert, buoyant, vigorous Professor. He was thin and pale, and aged. His talk was very gentle, and he was much interested in an account of Cavaliere Capellini's work amongst the soldiers of Italy. He said, "If he teaches them to look in the face of Christ, then all the foolish formalism will fall off, and the Italians will learn the Christ life." Next day he wrote, "I think Capellini's work worthy of all praise, and enclose a guinea as my subscription to the Military Church."

Although his public speaking was ended, his pen was busy with no fewer than five articles for July magazines,—on "Place-names of Scotland" for 'Blackwood' amongst them; but, alas! three more attacks of cardiac asthma towards the end of the month prostrated him completely. He was confined to bed and closely nursed, and by July 2 he was able to be removed to Pitlochry in an invalid carriage. Mrs Blackie had secured Tom-namonachan cottage for the summer months. Here he slowly revived, and crept daily to a seat in Miss Molyneux's garden, where he could rest and look on Ben Vrackie. By-and-by he could stand a short drive, and when his old friend Mr Gladstone came to Fisher's Hotel, he drove down to call on him, and roused his spirit to battle when the great statesman rather slighted Socrates

and confessed to sympathy with Xanthippe, who must indeed have been bored at times. A fortnight of the peaceful cottage revived him wonderfully, and he ventured on July 17 to come downstairs to breakfast to read prayers himself, and, too daring, to climb the hill to Balghoulán in the afternoon. A lively rubber of whist completed the day's doings, and at 1.30 A.M. he paid the penalty in the form of a very bad asthmatic attack. This was followed by others, and he was again confined to his room, weak and ailing. It was an agitating time for all, but by the beginning of August he was so far better as to write letters and to make out his slow walk to the garden-seat.

On July 28 friends in Pitlochry decorated the cottage in honour of his eighty-fifth birthday, and Miss Molyneux sent him a beautifully carved lion, eighty-five roses, one for each year, and a tender tribute of verse, entitled “The Happy Warrior.”

“For him who through a faithful life  
The path of duty bravely chose,  
Beauty has blossomed out of strife,  
And every year has borne its rose.

So greet we thee, beloved and true,  
With roses fairest of the fair;  
Such sweetness is the warrior's due,—  
Such garlands may a victor wear.

With lips attuned and hearts aglow,  
We bless the day that gave thee birth,—  
That sent thee forth through weal and woe  
To lift a standard high on earth.

And thou, whate'er the future bring,  
Canst view it with untroubled brow,  
Still journeying on to meet thy King,  
And live His servant there as now."

A bonfire on the hill behind Tom-na-monachan closed the celebrations; but the Professor was not able to be present, and his thanks were spoken by Dr Stodart Walker.

A letter to his sister, Mrs Kennedy, bears for date August 5, and may be quoted:—

Shortly after your letter, the 28th July arrived, and the good old Scot of fourscore years and five was forthwith overwhelmed by an epistolary storm of birthday greetings that demanded an immediate grateful acknowledgment. Really, I seem to have done some good to my fellow-countrymen, but exaggeration in matters that touch the public pulse, especially in the case of an octogenarian, is natural; and I must tone it down to something of a more modest estimate. I feel great weakness, and, in fact, only half alive. Perfect recovery from such a radical weakness of function at my time of life is contrary to nature; and I will address myself to a pious curtailment of all hopes and fears and ambitions belonging to this sublunary sphere.

After the July attacks he had rest for at least two months. When the writer reached Tom-na-

monachan towards the end of August, he had picked up strength sufficient for a quiet round of daily interests. He was eating with better appetite, and sleeping more soundly, so that the bright temper with its normal hopefulness had returned. Snatches of psalm and song resounded through the house, and at night over a rubber of whist he grew bellicose and noisy. He presented his guest with the 'Greek Primer,' and gave her a first lesson out of the Gospel of St John, exacting a promise that she would learn Greek. He was busy with Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall,' reading it through for the first time, and astonished at its monumental character. The subject displeased him, however, for he preferred the building up to the breaking up of a great State. On Sundays he read the 'Life of Wilberforce.' When a friend of academic education came to see him, he talked of Greek, ancient and modern, all the time. At intervals in the day he penned a letter or two in answer to unknown correspondents, who hurled all sorts of questions at him, from "What is the origin of evil?" downwards. Constantly in his talk recurred that counsel of perfection: "Look Christ in the face; in all doings note what Christ did in like circumstances, and do as He would have done on earth."

Once, calling on Mrs Glassford Bell at Baled-



mund, he insisted, against all advice, on singing "Get up an' bar the door," with great energy,—dramatic, not vocal, for the notes were feeble. It was the first time that he had sung a Scottish song since the spring. On August 29 he had the pleasant news from Mr Douglas that a second edition of 'Christianity and the Ideal of Humanity' was called for. By that time he was strong enough to come to breakfast and to read prayers. His last social appearance at Pitlochry was at an afternoon party given by Miss Molyneux, where he read aloud his "Farewell to Ben Vrackie," sent afterwards to 'Maga'—his last contribution to that magazine—and written on the seat to which he made his slow way every day.

On the last day of the month he was taken back to Edinburgh in an invalid carriage, and was well enough on his return to make calls near at hand, and to write a lengthy letter to the 'Scotsman' of September 10 on the "Threefold Order." But the weakness was increasing, and sleeplessness once more set in. He tossed about restlessly, sometimes singing and lecturing in his snatches of perturbed sleep; but he was not depressed, as in the first stages of his long illness. Towards the end of September the cardiac asthma returned, and three attacks quickly followed each other, leaving him always more or less enfeebled :

still the mind was clear, and although he had to dictate most of his letters, he was able to grapple with all their subjects, and sent another long letter to the 'Scotsman,' this time on the Greek Travelling Scholarship.

Unfortunately he was tempted to try the little strength that returned towards the middle of October by going to the inaugural lecture of the History Class in the University, and by making calls. This brought further weakness, and in November he was limited to the dining-room, where he sat, or lay, and received many visitors. A look of great age had come upon him, and his friends could hardly restrain their tears when they saw him. He would point to Sir George Reid's portrait and say, "That's Blackie, not this." He would apologise to ladies for not being able to open the door for them. Strong men sobbed as well as women when they left him. Henry Irving was one of these visitors, and stooped to kiss his brow as he bade him good-bye. The Professor took the great actor's hand and kissed it.

A letter from Dr George MacDonald reached him about the middle of November.

The shadows of the evening that precedes a lovelier morning are drawing down around us both [he wrote], but our God is in the shadow as in the shine, and all is

and will be well : have we not seen His glory in the face of Jesus ? and do we not know Him a little ?—Good-bye for a little while. I have loved you ever since I knew you, for you loved the truth.

On Sunday, December 9, Mr Lees of Boleside, Galashiels, paid him a last visit.

The Professor and Mrs Blackie were alone in the dining-room, he in his arm-chair beside the fire. I conveyed my wife's sympathy, which led him to talk, as he always did, about her with agreeable interest. I mentioned another invalid whom I had just seen, who was fretting that he had not got into the fresh air. The Professor said : " No man was ever more active than myself. But I fret not : I complain not. God has been very good to me during all these years ; and here I sit waiting His coming and ready for His call." When I rose to go, extending my hand, I bade him good-bye. I had felt it would be my last interview with him. He took my hand in both of his and clasped it once or twice, and with some tearful emotion he bade me good-bye. " Yes, good-bye," he said ; " remember my messages to your wife,"—and as I went towards the door I heard a blessing following me.

Later in the month the Professor wrote with his own hand to Dr R. F. Horton two long letters on the inspiration of St Paul's writings, with full mental vigour, but they were scarcely legible. Warm regard for his correspondent is expressed in these letters, although they are too strictly on theological matters for quotation.

On both the 6th and the 20th of December the

Hellenic Society met at his house. The members were reading the "Prometheus Bound," and he busied himself beforehand in preparing the play. Dr Forbes White was present at the last meeting, and writes: "The old man was still alert and keen in intellect, and more genial and lovable than ever. Next morning he was fresh and bright, arranging for the next meeting."

On Christmas-day he insisted upon a luncheon-party. "He sat in his big chair, while nine friendly people lunched and chattered. He wanted this small affair carried out." But that evening the asthma returned and lasted sixteen hours, so that next day he could speak but one word at a time, and then sleep returned and a little appetite. "His weakness is pitiable, and the mind remaining very active, he wonders why he can do so little. He has given up writing altogether." On New Year's Day Mrs Blackie wrote:—

A sort of rally has come; yesterday we got him out of his room. He sat in great comfort for three hours—much wrapped up,—and had after that a long night of sleep. We had prayers beside him at his request, and since that he has again slept. Such changes occur in his feelings of ease and the dreadful unease of weakness, that we never know what to look for. Archie and Bella continue to watch him by day and by night, and Dr Balfour had a good verdict to give, so just at this moment I am more comfortable.

From his bedroom on the ground-floor to the dining-room and back again was all the change now possible. He lay very silent, often not speaking for hours. A touch of bronchitis was added to the other symptoms, but he was active in certain directions, still writing some letters very slowly, and dictating others to his wife and to a cousin, who came to be with them. A neighbour, Mrs Miller Morrison, often read aloud to him, and after a good night he read for an hour or two himself. He had never used spectacles, and did not require them now. The straw hat was discarded, and a soft velvet scholar's cap took its place. Froude's 'Erasmus' and 'Beside the Bonnie Brier-Bush' were the last books read aloud to him, and he had the pleasure of seeing "Ian Maclaren" one evening. "He popped in as we sat at dinner, a big, grave, well-mannered man. He found time to tell us his method of working, and Pro. and he fraternised pleasantly."

'Erasmus' occupied and stimulated his mind, so that he dictated two papers upon his life and work for the 'People's Friend,' the first of which appeared on February 18. In the New Year number there had appeared some lines and a short paper on Father Sarpi,—and he had also been able to contribute an article on "The Natural

Method of Teaching" to the 'Contemporary Review' for February. His thoughts were often occupied with the Greek Travelling Scholarship. He dictated, and even wrote, many letters on the subject to Professor Cowan, to Sir Arthur Mitchell, and to others. With the new year came the determination to make the fund, as far as modern Greek went, a realisation; and he saw Sir Arthur Mitchell frequently about the clause in his will affecting this provision. He was urgent that the Church of Scotland should raise the fund of £5000 to provide for the wider scholarship, and so restore to the Scottish Church a high standard of classical and Biblical training. But to make sure for the University of Edinburgh the advantage of the Greek Scholarship, he left £2500, to be devoted in due time to its perpetual realisation, limiting the candidature to theological students of that University. The bequest secures the eventual fulfilment of the desire of his heart.

On February 2 he wrote to his friend Mr Blackwood, offering "to dash off a short article, not above six pages, with the title 'Is Greek a Dead Language?'"—and gibing in the old fashion at Oxonian conservatism. This article was never written. Later in the month, he engaged in a correspondence with his friend and colleague of many years, Professor Campbell Fraser, upon the

philosophy of the Scholiasts and the exact value of the term *Realism*. This train of thought and inquiry belonged to his study of 'Erasmus.'

All February he received letters from scholars of different Universities full of appreciation of his efforts both for Greek and for reformed methods of teaching. Mr George Seton saw him on the 20th of February for about five minutes, and before he left the old man suddenly said with energy, "People are beginning to discover that there is a good deal of truth in many of Blackie's fads."

Two days after he was no longer able to leave his bedroom. He lay, suffering neither pain nor restlessness, but the bodily powers were failing, and he looked already like a spirit. Even then he thought of others rather than of himself, and would break long spells of silence to bid his nephew rest. "Go to bed, boy; you require sleep." When the asthma returned he would say, "Close the door that Oke mayn't hear."

"I never saw or heard anything in all the days of his illness," wrote Dr Stodart Walker, "that was not worthy of a true gentleman and follower of Christ."

Sir Arthur Mitchell saw him a few days before the end, and describes the interview :—

He spoke with force and earnestness of his patriotic desire to raise the scholarship of the Scottish Church, with

the view not only of adding to its dignity, but of increasing its usefulness in the deepest and best sense. He had also much to say of 'Erasmus.' And I remember feeling how much his words, even when he allowed himself to be somewhat unrestrained and vehement, tended to make those hearing them better men, larger-hearted, fuller of truth and love. He was quite bright and happy. When leaving him I said, "Good-bye, most pleasant friend,—patriot, poet, and philosopher." "Then you have not forgotten," he quickly said. Long years ago he had told me that he would like to be so remembered.

. It was on February 27 that Dr Forbes White saw him for the last time.

As he wakened from his sleep he took me by the hand and said, "Ἀληθείων ἐν ἀγάπῃ: *agapē*, do you hear?" with a humorous glance. "Speaking the truth in love, in love." Then his thoughts seemed to wander on the same lines. "The sun gives light and heat; light for knowledge, heat for love."

Other old friends saw him — Professor Adam Smith, Sir Noël Paton, Dr Walter C. Smith, Dr Cameron Lees, Dr MacGregor, Sheriff Vary Campbell.

He talked at long intervals of the songs of Burns and of the Psalms of David; and the 19th Psalm, the first that he learnt in childhood, was the last upon his lips.

On Friday, March 1, before he became unconscious, his nephew repeated to him all his favourite mottoes, and he smiled at each. When Dr



Walker came to "speaking the truth in love," he murmured, "Remember, my boy, the Greek word means acting too."

His wife came into the room and bent over him. "Do you know your old Oke?" she said, and he answered, "I have always loved her." He bade her, his sister Mrs Walker, and his nephew a last farewell, kissing his wife again and again and saying, "You were always a good and faithful Oke;" and later in the day he was heard to murmur "Oke, Oke," when he was nearly unconscious. For some hours he lay, and then waking for a few minutes, he uttered his last words on earth: "The Psalms of David and the songs of Burns, but the Psalmist first," and with a smile, and repeating "Psalms, poetry," he passed again into unconsciousness, which lasted till the next morning at a quarter to ten o'clock, when he gently breathed his last. Death had no triumph in that passage into immortality.

It was on Saturday, March 2, that John Stuart Blackie died, eighty-five years and seven months old; and on Wednesday, March 6, he was buried with such honours as were due to the scholar, the reformer, the warrior, the patriot, and the Christian.

For the intervening days he lay in the dining-room, wrapped in dark plush dressing-gown and crimson sash, with the black velvet cap on his head and flowers heaped up around him. Working men, Highland students, poor women, trudged long distances to look upon his ethereal face, and all were admitted.

The first to send a message of loving and reverential sorrow was Lord Rosebery, himself upon a bed of sickness; then they came in ever-increasing numbers from all parts of the kingdom.

How is it possible truly to describe his funeral? Not the simple pageantry of procession and Presbyterian ceremonial; not the last honours paid by academic and scientific bodies; not the tread of mourners from city and burgh, from northern solitude and southern glen; not the music in the Cathedral and the wild lament of the Highland pipers; not the measured stateliness of that long train,—not these alone, but the outburst of affection from tens of thousands who were not called upon to share the burden of befitting grief; the shepherds wrapped in plaids with bowed heads by the wayside; the women who kissed the bier that bore him, and begged for a flower from the heap upon his coffin; the men, noble and simple, who sobbed as they watched it pass; the tears of

a multitude of poor, who loved him because he first loved them,—these were his funeral's unbidden and unmarshalled pomp.

For those who were not there [wrote Professor Patrick Geddes in 'The Scots Renaissance'] the scene is wellnigh as easy to picture as for us to recall; the wavy lane, close-walled with drawn and deepened faces, the long black procession marching slow, sprinkled with plaid and plume, crowded with college cap and gown, with civic scarlet and ermine, marshalled by black-draped maces. In the midst, the Black Watch pipers marching their slowest and stateliest—then the four tall black-maned horses, the open bier, with plain unpolished oaken coffin high upon a pyramid of flowers, a mound of tossing lilies, with Henry Irving's lyre of violets "To the Beloved Professor," its silence fragrant at its foot. Upon the coffin lay the Skye women's plaid, above his brows the Prime Minister's wreath, but on his breast a little mound of heather opening into bloom.

The heather was laid there by his nephew, Archie Walker; and beside it lay another honoured wreath, given to their dear master by the devoted maids, Bella, Annie, and Blair.

In the Cathedral, Dr Cameron Lees, Dr Flint, Dr Story, and Dr Walter C. Smith took part in the service, and then joined the slow progress through the crowds. Nine Black Watch pipers from the Castle played in succession "The Land o' the Leal," the "Flowers o' the Forest," and "Lochaber no more" in front of the bier. And

at the grave in the Dean Cemetery, when all were gathered in their places, Dr Walter C. Smith prayed :—

O God, our Father in heaven, it is with sad, sorrowing hearts that we lay all that can perish of our beloved friend in the grave, in the sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection. Sad and sorrowful as this day is, yet it is not unmixed with much that gladdens us, turning sorrow into sweetness. We give Thee thanks, O God, that we ever knew him. We give Thee thanks for all the sweet fellowship we had together; for the sweetness of his hearty counsel, which remains as perfume and as ointment with us. We give Thee thanks for his varied and manifold labours during his manhood—labours carried on to the last of a long life; and we give Thee thanks for the Christian faith, for the sweet meekness, for the tranquil hopefulness of his last days among us. Bless the Lord, O our souls. And, O God, grant that, as we remember these things, and remember all the pureness, the unworldliness, the simplicity, and the sincerity of this faithful man, we may be lifted up to walk in his footsteps, to follow him in his faith. One day we trust to find these broken bonds knit up before Thee in heaven, where there is no more parting, and where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. God bless those dear to him. Lord grant that she whom he has left alone may not be alone, may be never alone, and may be never without Thee. May God sustain and comfort her in this day of bereavement. Hear us for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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